





*Ex
Libris*

C. D. Borrel

THE Lantern 1-11-33

H. As. 2009 / (2)

LIVES OF INDIAN OFFICERS.

+

LIVES
OF
INDIAN OFFICERS,

Illustrative of the History
OF THE
CIVIL AND MILITARY SERVICES OF INDIA.

By JOHN WILLIAM KAYE,

AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN," "THE LIFE OF LORD METCALFE,"
"THE HISTORY OF THE SEPOY WAR," &c. &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

A. STRAHAN AND CO., LUDGATE HILL;

AND

BELL AND DALDY, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

1867.

[The right of Translation is reserved.]

W6167/166

Bayerische
Staatsbibliothek
München

LONDON:

PRINTED BY C. WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STERNND.

CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

	PAGE
SIR ALEXANDER BURNES	1
CAPTAIN ARTHUR CONOLLY	67
MAJOR ELDRED POTTINGER	145
MAJOR D'ARCY TODD	209
SIR HENRY LAWRENCE	275
GENERAL JAMES NEILL	353
BRIGADIER-GENERAL JOHN NICHOLSON	417
APPENDIX	493

LIVES
OF
INDIAN OFFICERS.

SIR ALEXANDER BURNES.

[BORN 1805.—DIED 1841.]

ENTERING upon the last year of the last century, a youth ^{Montrose.} from the Scotch borough of Montrose, who had gone up to London to seek his fortune, wrote to his mother, saying: "I have passed many a serious hour, reflecting on, weighing, examining minutely, the advantages and disadvantages, which are likely to follow my conduct in the different plans proposed, and I find the result in favour of going to India on the establishment. Perhaps my wishes to obtain, or my favourable ideas of, that situation have biased my judgment, and prevented me from seeing every circumstance as it ought to have been seen; so I will say little more on the subject, except to inform you of what distresses me greatly, but will perhaps please you—viz. the uncertainty of succeeding as I could wish." The letter, from which this extract is taken, is signed "Your loving and affectionate Son, JOSEPH HUME."

Twenty years afterwards, the writer, who had been thus doubtful of his power to obtain an appointment on the Indian establishment for himself, was able to obtain appointments for others. He had become a man of great influence in his native town. He had gone out to India poor, and he had returned rich, whilst still in the very prime of his life. He had returned to take a distinguished part in public affairs, with thirty or forty years of good life and of good service still remaining in him. It was a natural and a laudable ambition

1800—1820. that he should seek to represent his native town in the great imperial Parliament, and to do for it and its people all the good that lay in his power; so he canvassed the borough and its dependencies in the liberal interests, and in 1818 was duly returned.*

The success of Joseph Hume was great encouragement to the youth of Montrose. He had taken his first start from a very humble beginning, and he had risen solely by the force of his own personal energy. Might not others do the same? Moreover, the success of Joseph Hume was something more than an encouragement to the young men of the borough. It was an assistance to them. He had become an influential member of the Court of Proprietors of East India Stock, and he had, therefore, "interest at the India House." It must be admitted that for very many years what was familiarly called "borough-mongering," was the main cause of so many doughty young Scots finding their way into the Indian services. Practically, this was a happy circumstance. At all events, it bore good fruit. But for this, the Company's army might have been wanting in that muscular sinewy strength imparted to it by a constant recruiting from the middle classes of the North. The Scotch member, in *esse* or in *posse*, may have thought about nothing but his seat; but it was often his good fortune "to entertain angels unaware," and to count among the happy circumstances of his life that he had "sent to India" a Malcolm, an Ochterlony, or a Munro.

The Burnes family.

Some of these happy circumstances were recalled with pleasure and with gratitude at the close of a well-spent life by Mr. Joseph Hume. Of one of them I am now about to write. In the first quarter of the present century there dwelt at Montrose a family bearing the name of Burnes. The family was of the same stock as that from which had sprung the inspired ploughman of Ayrshire, though the two branches of the family were pleased to spell their names after different fashions. The grandfather of Robert Burns, the poet, and the grandfather of James Burnes, writer to the signet, bur-

* The Montrose Burghs then included Montrose, Brechin, Arbroath, Bervie, and Aberdeen. Mr. Hume had previously represented Weymouth in Parliament.

gess of Montrose, and head of the family of which I am now writing, were brothers. In the first year of the century, James Burnes married a daughter of Adam Glegg, chief magistrate of Montrose, and in due course had fourteen children, nine of whom lived to be adults. Of these nine children the four eldest were sons. The first-born was named James, after his father; the second Adam, after his maternal grandfather; the third Robert; and the fourth Alexander, after whom called I know not, but there could have been no better name for one who was destined to do great things in the countries watered by the Indus and bounded by the Caucasian range. He often used to say, in later days, that he found his name a help to him. In Afghanistan he was always known as "Sekunder Burnes," and Sekunder (Alexander) has been a great name in that part of the world ever since the great days of the Greek occupation. 1800—20.

Mr. James Burnes was, I have said, a burgess of Montrose. He was a man greatly respected by the townspeople, both for his integrity and ability, and he came to be provost of the borough, and recorder or town-clerk. For many years he took an active part in the local politics of the place, and there were few places in which local politics occupied so much of the time and the thoughts of the good people of a country town. The influence of Provost Burnes was, of course, great in the borough. It was no small thing for a candidate for the representation of Montrose and its dependencies to have the Burnes interest on his side. He was not a man to forsake his principles for gain; but there was no reason why, with four stout clever boys pressing forward for employment, and eager to make their fortunes, he should not endeavour to turn his influence to good account for the benefit of his children. He was very useful to Mr. Hume, and Mr. Hume, in turn, was well disposed to be useful to the family of Burnes. In truth, the tide of liberal politics was somewhat high and heady at that time; and even the children of the worthy burgess's household were no indifferent observers of passing events, but had their bursts of political excitement like their elders. The acquittal of Queen Caroline produced as great a fervour of exultation in that distant seaport town as it did in Westminster or Hammersmith; and one of the Burnes boys, who

1820.

had at a very early age habituated himself to keep a diary, then recorded in its pages: "November 14, 1820. News came of the rejection by the House of Lords of the Bill of Pains and Penalties against the Queen. No schooling on account of it. . . . November 15. A most brilliant illumination took place in Montrose and the surrounding neighbourhood, on account of the glorious triumph the Queen had obtained over her base and abominable accusers. Many devices were exhibited, one in the Town-hall with a green bag all tattered and torn; in another window, a figure of the Queen, with the word 'Triumphant,' and above it 'C. R.' The display of fireworks was unlimited. Two boats were burned, and some tar-barrels, and upon the whole it did great credit to Montrose."

Early days of
Alexander
Burnes.

The writer of this journal was Alexander Burnes, the third surviving son, then fifteen years of age, and a student in the Montrose Academy, the head-master of which, Mr. Calvert, had something more than a local reputation as a distinguished classical scholar and a highly successful teacher—as men taught in those days with the book in one hand and the scourge in the other. He was a clever, in some respects, perhaps, a precocious boy; and had learnt as much in the way, both of classics and of mathematics, as most promising striplings of his age. He had read, too, some books of history, and a few of the masterpieces of English poetry. He belonged to a debating society, and was not altogether unskilled in disputation. Like other high-spirited boys, he had taken part in conflicts of a more dangerous character than mere conflicts of words, and fought some hard battles with the boys of the town. Altogether, though not to be accounted a prodigy, he was a youth of high spirit and good promise, and had in him some of the stuff of which heroes are made.

But I can find nothing in the record of Alexander Burnes's early life to warrant the conclusion that the bent of his mind towards foreign travel was then in any way discernible. What little I can find in his papers rather bears the other way. I have before me a collection, in his own writing, of the speeches he delivered at the "Montrose Juvenile Debating Society," the thesis of one of which (proposed by himself) is, "Whether

1820.

reading or travelling is most advantageous for the acquisition of knowledge?" To this the "juvenile debater" replied: "My opinion on the present subject is, that reading is the most advantageous for the acquisition of knowledge." And then he proceeded to illustrate this opinion, by reading to the meeting an interesting extract from the recently published travels of the African traveller, Belzoni. Having done this, he said: "Now, to have it in our power to amuse ourselves any night we please with the book which contains all these disasters, without the labour which has been encountered, shows in the clearest light the advantages derived from that most delightful and pleasing amusement, reading." This is charmingly illogical. The young debater forgot, in his enthusiastic admiration of the book that had given him so much pleasure, that there could have been no "reading" in this case if there had been no "travelling." Certainly it would have been difficult to cite a more unfortunate illustration of the views of the juvenile speaker. It is possible that when, in after life, he came to gather up his ideas a little more compactly, he bethought himself of the mistake he had made, and remembered that it is an essential condition to the "acquisition of knowledge" from books of travel like Belzoni's, that there should be Belzonis to write them.

Neither, indeed, is there anything to indicate that the desires of young Alexander Burnes at that time turned towards a life of military adventure in the eastern or the western worlds. Of the hundreds of cadets who year after year went out to India at that time in the service of the East India Company, only an exceptional few were moved by any impulses of their own to enter the Indian army. The choice was commonly made for them as a matter of convenience by their parents or guardians; and the case of Alexander Burnes was no exception to the rule. The success of Mr. Hume was that which decided the choice of the worthy burgess of Montrose, for it afforded at once a great encouragement and a material aid. The eldest hope of the Burnes family, James, was destined for the medical service—that service in which Mr. Hume had so rapidly made a fortune—and was pursuing his studies in London, with a view to an Indian career. Adam, the second, was training for the law in

1821. his native burgh. And Alexander, by the assistance of Mr. Hume, was to be provided with a cadetship, as soon as he was old enough to take up the appointment. When, therefore, the young student was within a few weeks from the completion of his sixteenth year, he was sent up to London in a Dundee smack; and having arrived there on the 14th of March, 1821, he was on the following day introduced by Mr. Hume to Mr. Stanley Clerk, a member of the Court of Directors, and was told that his name had been duly entered for a cadetship of infantry on the establishment of Bombay. He spent two months in London, studying under the well-known Oriental professor, Dr. Gilchrist, and watched over by Mr. Joseph Hume, who gave him good advice of all kinds, and acted as his banker; and then, on the 16th of May—his birthday—he attended at the India House, and formally took the oath of allegiance.

Commence-
ment of his
Indian career.

It was a matter of pleasant family arrangement that the eldest brother, James Burnes, who had been appointed an assistant-surgeon on the Bombay establishment, should sail in the same vessel with Alexander; so they embarked together, early in June, on board the good ship *Sarah*. Of this voyage there are abundant records in the young cadet's journal, many passages of which exhibit considerable discernment of character, and no slight powers of description. But it must suffice here to state that, after an uneventful voyage, the *Sarah* arrived at her destination, and that, on the 21st of October, 1821, these two young Montrosians found themselves on the beach of Bombay, with very little money in their pockets, and with very slender interest; but with stout hearts, clear heads, and that determination to make for themselves careers in the public service which, in the days of the East India Company, carried so many members of our middle classes in India straight on to fortune and to fame.

The brothers were soon separated. On the 13th of November, James Burnes was gazetted to do duty as an assistant-surgeon with the Artillery at Maloongah. Four days before this, Alexander's name had appeared in General Orders, by which he was posted to do duty with the 1st Battalion of the

1821.

3rd Regiment of Native Infantry at Bombay. On the 19th, he recorded in his journal that he had “commenced his military career,” and appeared on parade. From that day he made steady progress in his profession. He applied himself sedulously to the cultivation of the native languages. He had continued on board ship the studies which he had commenced under Dr. Gilchrist in London, and now he supplemented his literary pursuits by making and steadily adhering to the rule, to converse with his native servants only in Hindostanee; and on the 8th of December he wrote in his journal: “Ever since I ordered my servants to address me in Hindostanee I find my improvement very great, and I am persuaded that there is no method more effectual in acquiring the language than the one I am at present pursuing, for it unites the theoretical and the practical. Having migrated from my own country, and being rather of a curious and searching disposition, I have begun to gain as much information concerning the manners, customs, laws, and religions of this people—a study not only amusing and interesting, but highly instructive; for what is it that makes a man, but a knowledge of men and manners?” There was nothing which a man might not achieve in India, who thus set himself to work in the right way. There was proof of this even then before the young “unposted ensign.” He had carried out with him, as most young men carry out, letters of introduction to the Governor and other influential people of the Presidency. The Governor at that time was Mr. Mountstuart Elphinstone, whose kindness and affability of manner won the heart of the young soldier at once. “The Governor,” he wrote home to his family at Montrose, “received us with great politeness, and invited us to the most splendid fête I had ever beheld, and did not behave in a ‘How do?’ manner, but was extremely affable and polite, which, among a party of a hundred, and for the most part generals and great men, was a great deal. . . . A few weeks ago a grand public ball was given to Sir John Malcolm, on his leaving India,* to which I had the honour of receiving an invitation; but where it came from I know not. It was, if anything, grander than Mr. Elphinstone’s fête, and held in a house built for the purpose, about the size of the old Council

* See *ante*, Memoir of Sir John Malcolm, vol. i. page 211.

1821—22. House at Montrose, illuminated with lamps from top to bottom." There must have been something in all this greatly to inspire and encourage the young Scotch subaltern, for Malcolm himself had risen from the same small beginning, and now his name was in every man's mouth, and all were delighting to do him honour. What might not any young Scot, with the right stuff in him, do in India? In all directions there was encouragement and assurances not likely to be thrown away upon a youth of young Burnes's lively imagination. A Montrose man had sent him out to India; an Edinburgh man was now at the head of the Government of Bombay; a Glasgow man was Governor of the Madras Presidency; and now the son of an Eskdale farmer was receiving the plaudits of all classes of his countrymen, and returning for a while to his native land, a successful soldier and a successful statesman, amidst a whirl of popularity that might have fully satisfied the desires of the most ambitious hero in the world.

But to young Alexander Burnes the encouragements of the future were not greater than the consolations of the present. "I like the country amazingly," he wrote to Montrose, "and as yet am not at all desirous of a return to my own land. Here I have everything to be wished for—plenty of time to myself, a gentlemanly commanding officer, and several very pleasant brother-officers." But he added, for thoughts of home were still pulling at his heart, "how dearly should I like to see little Charley or Cecilia trudging into my canvas abode—but, ah! that is far beyond probability. However, I may yet see Charley in India, for he seems a boy made for it."

Thoughts of active service soon began to stir his mind. There was a prospect of a war with China, and the young soldier was eager to take part in it. "There has been a most dreadful disturbance," he wrote to his parents, on the 30th of April, 1822, "between the powers of China and the East India Company within these few months; so all trade between these countries is now at a stop, and nothing seems more inevitable than war, for it is in everybody's mouth, and every person is anxious to go. I hope I may be sent. If I am not sent along with my regiment, I shall certainly volunteer; for if a man does not push on he will never see service, and, of

course, will never be an officer worth anything. What will the poor old maids of Montrose do for want of tea?" But the excitement passed away. There was no war. And so young Alexander Burnes fell back peacefully on his Oriental studies, and with such good success, that at the beginning of May, 1822, he went up for an examination in Hindostanee, and found that he passed for an interpretership. "I was so delighted," he wrote in his journal, "that I could scarcely contain myself." A fortnight before, he had been posted to the 2nd Battalion of the 11th Regiment of Native Infantry, but as the interpretership of that regiment was not vacant, he applied, without success, to be removed to another corps. Any disappointment, however, which he might have felt about this was soon removed by the necessities of action; for a few days afterwards his regiment was ordered to Poonah, which a few years before had been the capital of the Peishwah, and was still in the bloom of its historical associations. It was with no common interest that he repeatedly visited the battlefield of Khirkee. "The plain where the cavalry of the Peishwah charged I galloped over," he wrote in his journal, "and I can scarcely imagine a better place for cavalry to act than this, for scarcely a nullah intersects it."* 1822.
April 16, 1822.

The time passed very pleasantly at Poonah. "It is a most delightful place," he wrote, "and I like the Deccan amazingly. I have joined the 2nd Battalion of the 11th Bombay Native Infantry, which in point of discipline is not surpassed by any regiment in the service. . . . In point of officers there was never, perhaps, a more gentlemanly and pleasant set of men assembled together in an Indian Native Corps—in a word, I have got into a regiment that delights me, and naturally makes my time pass delightfully. . . ." Governor Elphinstone was then at Poonah, contributing by his hospitalities to the general happiness, and stimulating the youth of the station, by his example, to deeds of heroic sportsmanship. Here young Burnes fleshed his maiden spear during a hog-hunt of three days' duration. Here, too, he began the study of the Persian language. "I have been strenuously advised to begin Persian," he wrote to his friends at Montrose, "as it will improve my Hindostanee, and, perhaps, add greatly to my

* See *ante*, Memoir of Mountstuart Elphinstone, vol. i.

1822—23. future prospects in India; so I have commenced it." And he prosecuted the study with such good effect, that, after a few months, he was able to derive intense gratification from the perusal of the Persian poets. Before the end of the month of September he thus pleasantly reported his progress: "My bedroom is small, and brings often to my recollection my old little closet in the passage, for as it is my study I spend a great deal of time in it, and have managed to scribble pieces of poetry on its walls also; but they are now of a different language, for I have got quite enamoured of Persian poetry, which is really, for sound and everything, like a beautiful song—instead of *Lallah Rookh* in the English, I have got a *Lallah Rookh* in the Persian—at least a much more beautiful poem."

The regimental
staff.

In December, the regiment quitted Poonah *en route* for Surat. At Bombay, where they halted, Alexander Burnes again made a push for an interpretership, and this time with good success; for on the 7th of January, 1823, his name appeared in General Orders, gazetted as interpreter of the 1st Extra Battalion, which happened to be posted at Surat. He was, with one exception, the only ensign in the Bombay Army who held such an appointment. This was great promotion; but in the following year a brighter prospect still expanded before the young soldier. On the general reorganisation of the army, by which each battalion was converted into a separate regiment, with a separate regimental staff, Lieutenant Burnes, then little more than eighteen years old, was offered the regimental adjutancy. The offer excited him greatly, and he wrote: "Behold your son Alexander the most fortunate man on earth for his years! Behold him Lieutenant and Adjutant Burnes of the 21st Regiment, on an allowance of from five hundred to six hundred rupees a month." The appointment had been offered to him by his friend Colonel Campbell. "He did not think," wrote Burnes to Montrose, "that I would accept the situation, for my life in India has been so much devoted to study, that he conceived, and correctly too, that I was aiming at some political situation. I soon undeceived him, by telling him that I found my abilities greatly turned to that direction, but that, nevertheless, I was ready for anything else. . . . No man in his sound senses

would refuse a situation of fifty or sixty guineas a month.”*

1823.

The breaking up of the old regiment was, however, a source of no little grief to him, and a like feeling prevailed among all the best officers in the army. “I could little tolerate this,” said Burnes, “for I had become in a great degree attached to the men; but I less regretted it as my brother-officers were all to accompany me.” This reorganisation gave a blow to the discipline of the whole army, from which it never recovered.

From the journals which he kept in this year, a lively impression may be gained of the young soldier’s state of mind. A conviction was growing upon him that, notwithstanding early backwardness, there was some good cultivable ground in his nature, and that some day he would make for himself a name. He had conceived a desire to visit other Eastern countries, and was assiduously studying their languages. Like many others at that dangerous period of dawning manhood, he was haunted with strange doubts concerning both his material and spiritual being, and fancied that he was doomed to die young and to lapse into unbelief. There are few earnest inquiring minds that have not been subjected to that early blight of scepticism. A few passages from his diary will illustrate all these mental and moral phases. “July 24. . . . I find it frequently the case that dull, or rather middling, boys at school shine more in the world than those who are always at the head, and exquisite scholars. . . . I am the only illiterate man in my family—all professions but me. Never mind—quite content. A soldier’s life permits of much spare time, which I am improving.” “September 2. I reckon three years more will make me a Persian scholar, and five more will give me a tolerable knowledge of Arabic. Before many more months elapse, I purpose making a visit to Persia, and, if possible, Arabia; that is to say, if my circumstances will allow, as I feel confident of remaining amongst the inferior class of linguists if I do not go to the country.” “September 3. I have been ruminating on the probability of accomplishing the above project, and if I continue saving 50 rupees a month, as

* In this letter Alexander Burnes took to guarantee the payment of all again urged his father to send out his expenses.
brother Charles in the army, and under-

1823. I do at present, I may in time accumulate something ; but it is so expensive studying, that that keeps me from saving what I ought. . . . I expect to reach the height of preferment in this service, and only think my short life will hinder me from it." "September 4. . . . If a speedy return to my native land (say ten years) be not effected, I can entertain little hopes of living to an aged man. In constitution I may be robust, in body I am very weak, slender, and ill made, and if it be true, as I have often heard them say, 'I was born before my time.' This they tell me, and as my grandfather's house was the place of my birth, I begin to think so. If this is the case, it accounts for my shape. I was very small when born, and, indeed, so much so, that they baptised me three days after my birth, that I might not die nameless, which, according to superstitious people, is bad. I am different from all around me. I dislike all gymnastic and athletic exercises. I like *argument* much—a *jolly* party only now and then ; much study, and am very partial to history, but dislike novels extremely, even Scott's. My abilities are confined, but as my mind expands they seem to improve. I was very dull at school, and reckoned a *dolt*. I ought not to have been a soldier, although I glory in the profession, for I am too fond of pen and ink." "September 21. I have of late been deeply pondering in my own mind the strange opinions I begin to imbibe about religion, and which grow stronger every day. . . . Would to God my mind were settled on this truly important subject ! Could I be convinced fully of it, I would not believe in a future state, but it is an improbable thing to imagine God has made man gifted with reason, after his own image, and yet to perish. It is madness to dream of it. My ideas may be very barbarous, but I do not see that a man's happiness can be increased by his knowing there is a tribunal. . . . I lead a happy life, much more so than the generality of my companions, but I entertain different ideas of religion daily, and am afraid they will end in my having no religion at all. A fatalist I am, but no atheist. No, nor even a deist. No—what shall I call it ?—a sceptical blockhead, whose head, filled with its own vanities, imagines itself more capable than it is." "October 16. My second year in India being now on the eve of completion, I think it full time to remit money to

1823.

my father in Europe ; consequently sent a hoondee to Bombay for 246 rupees to Messrs. R. and Co., which, with former remittances, makes up a sum somewhat short of 50*l*. This I have desired to be transmitted home to my father directly, or to J. Hume, Esq., M.P., for him. I am thinking within myself how very gratifying this will be to my father, who could not certainly expect much from me, and particularly at present, when I am on reduced allowances."

The power of gratifying this laudable desire to remit money to his family in England was well-nigh checked at the outset by what might have been a serious misadventure, for which he would have long reproached himself. In those days there was still a good deal of gambling in the army, and in a luckless hour young Burnes was induced to play at hazard. He thus records the incident in his journal: "October 17. 'I have lost a day.' This day my feelings were put more to the test than any other day during my existence. G. and H. called in upon me in the morning, and as we are all *very* fond of cards, it was proposed by G. to play at hazard. I declined, on the plea, first, of its being daytime ; and secondly, on its being too much of a gambling game for me. The first I gave up, being master of the house, and in the second I yielded, provided the stakes were low. A quarter of a rupee was proposed, and we got on very well for some time, till G., beginning to lose, went very high. This induced me also. I lost 1500 rupees, and it was on the increase every turn up of the cards. It was proposed at this time (it being past the dinner-hour) to give up after our rounds. H. and G. played, and I reduced it to about 800 rupees. My turn came, and I lost. I was upwards of 1000 rupees in arrear. G. proposed once more. I agreed. I gained from H. and G., and when it came to my turn, I owed 500 rupees. I dealt out the cards. G. gave me a card, and went 50 rupees on ten cards at table, and lost 350 rupees." The upshot of the game was, that Burnes regained his money, and found himself with a balance of 13 rupees in his favour. But he had won much more than this. "I have got such a moral lesson," he added, "that I never intend handling cards at a round game for some time, and I am ashamed of myself, and shall ever be so. 'I've lost a day.' I could scarcely place the cards on the table, I got so

1824—25. nervous. No wonder. I had at that time lost my pay for half a year. Had I lost 1500 rupees, where would my prospects of sending money to my dear father have been? What is more than all, these gamblings derange my head and prevent me bestowing proper attention on my Persian studies."

The general
staff.

He gambled no more after this, but continued to apply himself steadily to the study of the native languages and to his military duties; and he soon made rapid progress in his profession. In 1825 there were threatenings of war with the Ameers of Sindh. There had been a repetition of those border forays which might have resulted in the devastation of Cutch, and a British force was equipped for the coercion of the marauders. To this force Alexander Burnes was attached as Persian interpreter, and he was afterwards appointed to the Quartermaster-General's department, which permanently removed him from the sphere of regimental duty. Writing from Bhooj to his early friend and patron, Joseph Hume, in July, 1825, he gave the following account of his condition and prospects: * "You must yourself be well acquainted with the present state of India to the eastward, and I can give you no more favourable accounts regarding the Bombay Presidency, as a cessation of hostilities at Burmah can only be the signal for a declaration of war with the Ameers of Sindh, our north-western neighbours. I can, perhaps, inform you of some particulars which may prove interesting regarding this and the adjacent province of India. About four or five years ago the nobles of Cutch called in the British Government to assist them in deposing their Rao (King), who had rendered himself very odious by the most wanton cruelty. Their request met

* This letter was written primarily to acknowledge the receipt of a letter of introduction to Sir David Ochterlony, which Mr. Hume had sent to the writer. As illustrative of a passage at page 416, vol. i. (Memoir of Sir Charles Metcalfe), the following may, perhaps, be read with interest: "I had the pleasure to receive your letter of August, 1824, enclosing one to Sir David Ochterlony, and beg leave to express my sincere thanks for the interest you have taken in my behalf. I took the earliest opportunity to forward it to the General, but his unfortunate quarrel with the

Government regarding the propriety of reducing Bhurtpore has given him enough to do, and fully accounts for no answer being received. Sir David is much regretted, and it seems to be the general opinion that it was a very impolitic measure to abandon the campaign when so overwhelming an army was encamped before the fort. Our misfortunes in 1805, when under the walls of Bhurtpore, are still fresh in the recollection of the natives, and this has given them, if possible, additional presumption."

1825.

with the approbation of our Government; the Rao was deposed, and his son raised to the musnud, with a Regency of five persons, of which the British Resident is one. A subsidiary force of two regiments was established, and the Cutch Durbar agreed to pay half. In April, 1825, a body of marauders invaded the province from Sindh, but they were not entirely natives of that country, many of the discontented of this province having joined them. Be it sufficient to say that there was little or no doubt of their having received great support from Sindh. They plundered the whole of the country around Bhooj, and, from the insufficiency of our force, actually cut up six hundred of the Rao's horse within four miles of camp. There being little doubt but that Sindh was at the bottom of it, some time elapsed before any attempt was made to dislodge them, it being considered prudent to wait the arrival of troops. Another native regiment and some regular cavalry have been added to the brigade; and Captain Pottinger, the Resident, has just told me that a letter has arrived from our agent at Hyderabad mentioning the march of a division of the Sindhian army, chiefly composed of Beloochees, and amounting to four or five thousand men, and every hour confirms the report. A third treaty with this nation may be patched up, but a war is inevitable ere long, and the want of officers and troops will be the cause of much expense to the Company. . . . I am proud to say that the same good fortune which I had at the commencement of my career seems still to attend me, and that the late disturbances in Cutch have elevated me from the regimental to the general Staff, having been appointed Quartermaster of Brigade to the Cutch Field Force. If you were to inquire of me how this has come about, I could not tell you, for I hardly know myself. The Brigadier of the station (Colonel Dyson) sent for me while I was Acting Adjutant in April last, and asked me if I would become his interpreter and Staff, vacating my own acting appointment under the hope of Government confirming his nomination. As I was only an Acting Adjutant, I consented, and fortunately I am confirmed in one of the appointments, which makes my pay and allowances 400 rupees a month. I should have liked the interpretership, but as the Staff is 400 rupees alone, I am very fortunate, and have every probability of retaining the

1825—29. situation for a long time, although it is only styled a temporary arrangement. If Sindh is invaded, an officer in the Quartermaster-General's department has a grand field opened to him. My pecuniary concerns are thus in a very thriving way. I have already sent home 250*l.*, and have more at my command. I am 500*l.* better off than any of my shipmates, whose letters of credit were in general five times the amount of mine, but then I have been very fortunate. I am not indebted in any way to the Governor, and the Commander-in-Chief has deprived me of both Quartermastership and Adjutancy, when recommended both times by the Commanding Officer, and the latter time by a Lieutenant-Colonel even. I must confess that chance must have done much for me against such opposition, but I am also greatly indebted to Colonel Leighton, who has always stood by me."

In a later letter the story is thus resumed: "I continued my study of the languages," he wrote to an old schoolfellow in the West Indies, "and mastered the Persian, which brought me to the notice of Government, and I was selected from the army to be Persian interpreter to a field force of eight thousand men, under orders to cross the Indus and attack the territory of Sindh, which is situated at the delta of that great river. . . . The force to which I was attached did not advance; the campaign terminated in 1825; but during its continuance I had, in the absence of other duty, devoted my time to surveying and geography, and produced a map of an unknown track, for which Government rewarded me by an appointment to the department of the Quartermaster-General—the most enviable line in the service. It removed me for good and all, before I had been four years in the service, from every sort of regimental duty. I advanced in this department step by step, and was honoured by the approbation of my superiors. In 1828 they raised me to be Assistant-Quartermaster-General of the Army, and transferred me to head-quarters at Bombay, on a salary of eight hundred rupees a month. There I met Sir John Malcolm, of whom you may have heard. I knew him not, but I volunteered to explore the Indus from where it is joined by the Punjab down to the ocean, and thus delighted the men in authority. I started at the end of 1829 on this hazardous undertaking, and after I had got half

3

1830.

through, it was recalled by Lord Bentinck, as it would have involved political difficulties at the moment. I did, however, so much, that I blush to sound my own praises. The substantial part of them is, that they have removed me entirely to the diplomatic line, as assistant to the Resident in Cutch, which is a foreign state, in alliance with the British, close on the Indus. It is difficult to draw a parallel between European and Indian situations; but, if one is to be made, I am what is called Secretary of Legation, and on the high road, though I say it myself, to office, emolument, and honour. I have now briefly sketched out my career. My pursuits are purely literary, and confined to investigating the antiquities of Asia and the wonders of this people. I have been tracing the magnanimous Alexander on his Quixotic journey to these lands; and I shall set out at the end of 1830 to traverse further regions, which have been untrodden since the Greeks of Macedon followed their leader. Being an accredited agent of the Government, I have their support in all these wanderings; so you see that I have hung the sword in the hall, and entered the Cabinet as a civilian. . . . My great ambition," he said, "is to travel. I am laying by a few spare rupees to feed my innocent wishes, and could I but have a companion like you, how doubly joyous would I roam among the ruins of the capitol, the relics of classic Athens, and the sombre grandeur of Egypt! These, and all the countries near them, are in my mind's eye; I think, I dream of them; and when I journey to my native land, my route will traverse them all. I purpose landing at Berenice on the Red Sea, and, following the Nile in its course across from classic to sacred lands, cross the plains of Syria and about Mount Sinai; thence, by Asia Minor, to the Hellespont and Greece, Italy, and merry France; and last of all to my native Scotia. I have enough of the good things of this life to start on this projected tour, when my ten years of service are out—that is, on the 31st of October, 1831."

But it was ordained by Providence that his journeyings should be quite in a different direction. In the early part of 1830, a despatch arrived at Bombay, from the Board of Control, enclosing a letter of compliment from the President, Lord Ellenborough, to Runjeet Singh, the great ruler of the Punjab,

1830.

together with a batch of horses that were to be forwarded to his Highness as a present from the King of England. It was necessary that the letter and the horses should be forwarded to Lahore, under the charge of a British officer. Sir John Malcolm was at this time Governor of Bombay. He was full of enterprise and enthusiasm; he had himself been a great traveller; and he was the one of all others to appreciate the achievements and to sympathise with the aspirations of such a man as Alexander Burnes. He accordingly recommended the young Bombay Lieutenant for this important duty, and the Supreme Government readily endorsed the recommendation. But although the man had been chosen, and chosen wisely, there was much discussion respecting the manner of the mission and its accompaniments, and very considerable official delay. "It is part of Sir John Malcolm's plan for the prosecution of my journey," wrote Burnes to the family at Montrose, in September, 1830, "that I quit Bombay before the Government make any arrangements for my voyage up the Indus to Lahore." In these days we know every foot of the ground, and such a journey as Burnes was about to undertake belongs only to the regions of common-place; but when Burnes, at this time, wrote about "the noble prospects which awaited him in being selected for a delicate and hazardous duty," he by no means exaggerated the fact. He was emphatically the Pioneer, and he had to cut and clear his way through briary difficulties and obstructions which have long since disappeared. He was not merely sent upon a complimentary mission to the ruler of the Punjab; he was directed also to explore the countries on the Lower Indus, and to this end he was entrusted with presents to the Ameers of Sindh.*

* If I were writing history, not biography, I should comment upon the error of this. As it is, I cannot resist quoting the following from a minute of Sir Charles Metcalfe, recorded in October, 1830: "The scheme of surveying the Indus, under the pretence of sending a present to Runjeet Singh, seems to me highly objectionable. It is a trick, in my opinion, unworthy of our Government, which cannot fail, when detected, as most probably it will be, to excite the jealousy and indignation of the powers on whom we play it. It is just

such a trick as we are often falsely suspected and accused of by the native Princes of India, and this confirmation of their suspicions, generally unjust, will do more injury, by furnishing the ground of merited reproach, than any advantage to be gained by the measure can compensate. It is not impossible that it may lead to war. I hope that so unnecessary and ruinous a calamity may not befall us. Yet, as our officers, in the prosecution of their clandestine pursuits, may meet with insult or ill treatment, which we may choose to

1831.

But the Ameers were mistrustful of our designs. They believed that Burnes had come to spy the nakedness of the land. With all the clearness of prophecy, they saw that for the English to explore their country, was some day for them to take it. So they threw all sorts of impediments in the way of Burnes's advance. "We quitted Cutch," he wrote to Sir John Malcolm, "on the 20th of January, 1831, and encountered every imaginable difficulty and opposition from the Ameers of Sindh. They first drove us forcibly out of the country. On a second attempt they starved us out. But I was not even then prepared to give up hopes, and I ultimately gained the objects of pursuit by protracted negotiations, and voyaged safely and successfully to Lahore." After he had once entered the Punjab, his journey, indeed, was quite an ovation. "My reception in this country," he wrote to his mother, on the last day of July, "has been such as was to be expected from a Prince who has had so high an honour conferred on him as to receive presents from our gracious Sovereign. Immediately that I reached his frontier he sent a guard of horsemen as an honorary escort, and announced my arrival by a salute of eleven guns from the walls of the fortresses I passed. But what is this to the chief of Bahwulpore, lower down, who came all the way to Cutch to meet me, and with whom I had an interview, announced by eighty guns?" The mission, which had reached Lahore on the 18th of July, quitted it on the 14th of August; and Burnes proceeded to Simlah, to give an account of his embassy in person to the Governor-General, who was then, with his secretaries, residing in that pleasant and salubrious retreat.

Lord William Bentinck received the young traveller with characteristic kindness, and listened with the deepest interest to the account of his adventures. He listened to the account, not only of what the young Bombay Lieutenant had done, but also of what he desired to do. Before he had started on this journey, Burnes had cherished in his heart the project of a still grander exploration—the exploration which was eventually to achieve for him fame and fortune. "I have a vast ambition,"

resent, that result is possible, however much to be deprecated." The sagacity of this is undeniable; but it is to be observed that Burnes was in no degree responsible for the policy here denounced. He had only to execute the order of the Government.

1831.

he wrote from the banks of the Jheelum to the "old folks at home," "to cross the Indus and Indian Caucasus, and pass by the route of Balkh, Bokhara, and Samarcand, to the Aral and Caspian Seas, to Persia, and thence to return by sea to Bombay. All this depends upon circumstances; but I suspect that the magnates of this empire will wish to have the results of my present journey before I embark upon another." He was right. But, having communicated the results of this journey, he found the Cabinet at Simlah well prepared to encourage another enterprise of the same character, on a grander scale. "The Home Government," he wrote to his sister, on the 23rd of September, 1831, "have got frightened at the designs of Russia, and desired that some intelligent officer should be sent to acquire information in the countries bordering on the Oxus and the Caspian; and I, knowing nothing of all this, come forward and volunteer precisely for what they want. Lord Bentinck jumps at it, invites me to come and talk personally, and gives me comfort in a letter." "I quit Loodhianah," he said, a few weeks later, "on the 1st of January, 1832, and proceed by Lahore to Attock, Caubul, Bameean, Balkh, Bokhara, and Khiva, to the Caspian Sea, and from thence to Astracan. If I can but conceal my designs from the officers of the Russian Government, I shall pass through their territory to England, and visit my paternal roof in the Bow Butts,"

1832.

The journey to
Bokhara.

After a few more weeks of pleasant sojourning with the vice-regal court, Alexander Burnes started on his long and hazardous journey. He received his passports at Delhi two days before Christmas, and on the 3rd of January, 1832, crossed the British frontiers, and shook off Western civilisation. He was accompanied by a young assistant-surgeon, named Gerard, who had already earned for himself a name by his explorations of the Himalayahs, and by two native attachés, —the one, Mahomed Ali, in the capacity of a surveyor; the other, a young Cashmeree Mahomedan, educated at Delhi, named Mohun Lal, who accompanied him as moonshee, or secretary. Traversing again the country of the "five rivers," and making divers pleasant and profitable explorations "in the

1832.

footsteps of Alexander the Great," in the middle of March the travellers forded the Indus, near Attock, took leave of their Sikh friends, and became guests of the Afghans. There were at that time no jealousies, no resentments, between the two nations. The little knowledge that they had of us, derived from the fast-fading recollections of Mr. Elphinstone's mission, was all in our favour; and we in our turn believed them to be a cheerful, simple-minded, kind-hearted, hospitable people. Along the whole line of country, from Peshawur to Caubul, which cannot now be even named amongst us without a shudder, the English travellers were welcomed as friends. From the Afghan capital, Burnes wrote, on the 10th of May, 1832, to his mother: "My journey has been more prosperous than my most sanguine expectations could have anticipated; and, instead of jealousy and suspicion, we have hitherto been caressed and feasted by the chiefs of the country. I thought Peshawur a delightful place, till I came to Caubul: truly this is a Paradise." His fine animal spirits rose beneath the genial influences of the buoyant bracing climate of Afghanistan. How happy he was at this time—how full of heart and hope—may be gathered from such of his letters as reached his friends. With what a fine gush of youthful enthusiasm, writing to the family at Montrose, to which his heart, untravelled, was ever fondly turning, he describes his travel-life on this new scene of adventure. ". . . . We travel from hence in ten days with a caravan, and shall reach Bokhara by the 1st of July. If the road from Bokhara to the Caspian is interrupted by war, of which there is a chance, I shall be obliged to pass into Persia, and in that event must bid farewell to the hope of seeing you, as I must return to India. The countries north of the Oxus are at present in a tranquil state, and I do not despair of reaching Istamboul in safety. They may seize me and sell me for a slave, but no one will attack me for my riches. Never was there a more humble being seen. I have no tent, no chair or table, no bed, and my clothes altogether amount to the value of one pound sterling. You would disown your son if you saw him. My dress is purely Asiatic, and since I came into Caubul has been changed to that of the lowest orders of the people. My head is shaved of its brown locks, and my beard, dyed black, grieves—as the

1832.

Persian poets have it—for the departed beauty of youth. I now eat my meals with my hands, and greasy digits they are, though I must say, in justification, that I wash before and after meals. . . . I frequently sleep under a tree, but if a villager will take compassion upon me I enter his house. I never conceal that I am a European, and I have as yet found the character advantageous to my comfort. I might assume all the habits and religion of the Mahomedans, since I can now speak Persian as my own language, but I should have less liberty and less enjoyment in an assumed garb. The people know me by the name of Sekundur, which is the Persian for Alexander, and a magnanimous name it is. With all my assumed poverty, I have a bag of ducats round my waist, and bills for as much money as I choose to draw. I gird my loins, and tie on my sword on all occasions, though I freely admit I would make more use of silver and gold than of cold steel. When I go into a company, I put my hand on my heart, and say with all humility to the master of the house, 'Peace be unto thee,' according to custom, and then I squat myself down on the ground. This familiarity has given me an insight into the character of the people which I never otherwise could have acquired. I tell them about steam-engines, armies, ships, medicine, and all the wonders of Europe, and, in return, they enlighten me regarding the customs of their country, its history, state factions, trade, &c., I all the time appearing indifferent, and conversing thereon 'pour passer le temps.' . . . The people of this country are kind-hearted and hospitable; they have no prejudices against a Christian, and none against our nation. When they ask me if I eat pork, I of course shudder, and say that it is only outcasts who commit such outrages. God forgive me! for I am very fond of bacon, and my mouth waters as I write the word. I wish I had some of it for breakfast, to which I am now about to sit down. At present I am living with a most amiable man, a Newab, named Jubbur Khan, brother to the chief of Caubul, and he feeds me and my companion daily. They understand gastronomy pretty well. Our breakfast consists of pillaw (rice and meat), vegetables, stews, and preserves, and finishes with fruit, of which there is yet abundance, though it is ten months' old. Apples, pears, quinces, and even *melons* are preserved,

1832.

and as for the grapes, they are delicious. They are kept in small boxes in cotton, and are preserved throughout the year. Our fare, you see, is not so bad as our garb, and like a holy friar, we have sackcloth outside, but better things to line the inside. We have, however, no *sack* or good wine, for I am too much of a politician to drink wine in a Mahomedan country. . . . I am well mounted on a good horse, in case I should find it necessary to take to my heels. My whole baggage on earth goes on my mule, over which my servant sits supercargo; and with all this long enumeration of my condition, and the entire sacrifice of all the comforts of civilised life, I never was in better spirits, and never less under the influence of *ennui*. . . . I cannot tell you how my heart leaps, to see all the trees and plants of my native land growing around me in this country."

When Burnes and his companions quitted Caubul, the Newab Jubbur Khan, who had hospitably entertained them, and had endeavoured to persuade them to protract their sojourn with him, made every possible arrangement for the continuance of their journey in safety and comfort, and bade them "God speed" with a heavy heart. "I do not think," said Burnes, "I ever took leave of an Asiatic with more regret than I left this worthy man. He seemed to live for every one but himself." He was known afterwards among our people by the name of "the Good Newab;" and the humanity of his nature was conspicuous to the last.

Having quitted Caubul, the English travellers made their way to the foot of the Hindoo-Koosh, or Indian Caucasus, and traversed that stupendous mountain-range to Koondooz, Kooloom, and Balkh. This was the route explored by those unfortunate travellers Moorcroft and Trebeck, of whom Burnes now found many traces, and whose sad history he was enabled to verify and authenticate. It was a relief to the young Englishman to find himself in the territory of the King of Bokhara, whose evil reputation had not been then established. "As we were now in the territories of a king," he naïvely recorded in the history of his journey, "we could tell him our opinions, though it had, perhaps, been more prudent to keep them to ourselves."

After a sojourn of three days at Balkh, which had many in-

1832.

teresting and some painful associations, for it had been the capital of the ancient Bactrian kingdom, and a little way beyond its walls was the grave of Moorcroft, Burnes and his companions made their way to the city of Bokhara, which they reached on the 27th of June. There they resided for a space of nearly four weeks, receiving from the Vizier all possible kindness and hospitality. "Sekundur," said he to Burnes on his departure, "I have sent for you to ask if any one has molested you in this city, or taken money from you in my name, and if you leave us contented?" I replied that we had been treated as honoured guests, that our luggage had not even been opened, nor our property taxed, and that I should ever remember with the deepest sense of gratitude the many kindnesses that had been shown to us in the holy Bokhara. I quitted this worthy man with a full heart, and with sincere wishes (which I still feel) for the prosperity of this country." The Vizier gave authoritative instructions to the conductors of the caravan with which Burnes was to travel, and to a Toorkoman chief who was to accompany it with an escort, to guard the lives and properties of the Feringhees, declaring that he would root them from the face of the earth if any accident should befall the travellers; and the King of Bokhara gave them also a firman of protection bearing the royal seal. It is instructive to consider all this with the light of after-events to help us to a right understanding of its significance.

From Bokhara the route of the travellers lay across the great Toorkoman desert to Merve and Meshed, thence to Astrabad and the shores of the Caspian; thence to Teheran, the capital of the dominions of the Shah of Persia, from which point Burnes moved down to the Persian Gulf, took ship there to Bombay, and afterwards proceeded to Calcutta. The story has been told by himself, with an abundance of pleasant detail, and is too well known to need to be repeated. Summing up the whole, he says of it, in a few striking words, "I saw everything, both ancient and modern, to excite the interest and inflame the imagination—Bactria, Trans-Oxiana, Scythia, and Parthia, Kharasm, Khorasan, and Iran. We had now visited all these countries; we had retraced the greater part of the route of the Macedonians; trodden the

kingdoms of Porus and Taxiles, sailed on the Hydaspes, crossed the Indian Caucasus, and resided in the celebrated city of Balkh, from which Greek monarchs, far removed from the academies of Corinth and Athens, had once disseminated among mankind a knowledge of the arts and sciences of their own history, and the world. We had beheld the scenes of Alexander's wars, of the rude and savage inroads of Jengis and Timour, as well as of the campaigns and revelries of Baber, as given in the delightful and glowing language of his commentaries. In the journey to the coast, we had marched on the very line of route by which Alexander had pursued Darius, while the voyage to India took us on the coast of Mekran, and the track of the Admiral Nearchus."

1833.

At Calcutta, Alexander Burnes laid before the Governor-General an account of his journey, accompanying it with much grave discourse on the policy which it was expedient for the British Government to pursue towards the different states which he had visited. The result was exactly what he wished. He was sent home to communicate to the authorities in England the information which he had obtained. All this was truly delightful. Never in the midst of his wanderings in strange places, and among a strange people, had he forgotten the old home in Montrose, and the familiar faces of the household there; never had his heart ceased to yearn for the renewal in the flesh of those dear old family associations. He liked India; he loved his work, he gloried in the career before him; but the good home-feeling was ever fresh in his heart, and he was continually thinking of what was said and thought in Montrose. And in most of our Indian heroes this good home-feeling was kept alive to the last. It was not weariness of India; it was not a hankering after England. It was simply a good healthy desire to revisit the scenes of one's youth, to see again the faces of one's kindred, and then, strengthened and refreshed, to return with better heart for one's work.

On the 4th of November, 1833, Burnes landed at Dartmouth, and wrote thence to his mother that he could scarcely contain himself for joy. On the 6th he was in London, with his brothers, David and Charles; dining in the evening with

Visit to England.

1833.

the Court of Directors, who had opportunely one of their banquets at the London Tavern. Before the week was out, he was in a whirl of social excitement; he was fast becoming a lion—only waiting, indeed, for the commencement of the London season, to be installed as one of the first magnitude. “I have been inundated by visits,” he wrote to his mother, “from authors, publishers, societies, and what not. I am requested to be at the Geographical Society this evening, but I defer it for a fortnight, when I am to have a night to myself. . . . All, all are kind to me. I am a perfect wild beast.—‘There’s the traveller,’ ‘There’s Mr. Burnes,’ ‘There’s the Indus Burnes,’ and what not do I hear. I wish I could hear you and my father, and I would despise all other compliments.” “I am killed with honours and kindness,” he said, in another letter, “and it is a more painful death than starvation among the Usbeks.” In all this there was no exaggeration. The magnates of the land were contending for the privilege of a little conversation with “Bokhara Burnes.” Lord Holland was eager to catch him for Holland House. Lord Lansdowne was bent upon carrying him off to Bowood. Charles Grant, the President of the Board of Control, sent him to the Prime Minister, Lord Grey, who had long confidential conferences with him; and, to crown all, the King—William the Fourth—commanded the presence of the Bombay Lieutenant at the Brighton Pavilion, and listened to the story of his travels and the exposition of his views for nearly an hour and a half.

The account of the interview, as recorded in his journal, is interesting and amusing: “Well, I have been an hour and twenty minutes with William the Fourth, and eventful ones they have been. It is not likely that I shall have many interviews with royalty, so I may be prolix in this, the first one. From the Castle Square gate I was taken to Lord Frederic Fitzclarence, who led me to the Chinese Hall, where I sat for twenty minutes till the King transacted his business with Sir Herbert Taylor. ‘Take a book,’ said Lord Frederic, ‘from the shelf and amuse yourself;’ and one of the first I pulled down, was—what? ‘Burnes’ Justice.’ This was ludicrous—was it but justice that I should see the King, or what? ‘Mr. Burnes,’ cried a page. I passed through two rooms; a large

1833.

hall was thrown open, and I stood, hat in hand, in the presence of King William. 'How do you do, Mr. Burnes? I am most glad to see you; come and sit down—take a chair—there, sit down, take a chair.' The King stood but I sat, as compliance is politeness. There was no bending of knees, no kissing of hand, no ceremony; I went dressed as to a private gentleman. I expected to find a jolly-looking, laughing man, instead of which, William looks grave, old, careworn, and tired. His Majesty immediately began on my travels, and, desiring me to wheel round a table for him, he pulled his chair and sat down by mine. Hereon I pulled out a map, and said that I hoped his Majesty would permit me to offer the explanation on it. I began, and got along most fluently. I told him of the difficulties in Sindh, the reception by Runjeet, &c., but William the Fourth was all for politics, so I talked of the designs of Russia, her treaties, intrigues, agencies, ambassadors, commerce, &c., the facilities, the obstacles regarding the advance of armies—I flew from Lahore to Caubul, from Caubul to Bokhara and the Caspian, and I answered a hundred questions to his Majesty. The King then got up, took me to a large map, and made me go over all a second time, and turning round to me, asked a great deal about me personally. 'Where were you educated?' 'In Scotland, Sir.' 'What is your age?' 'Twenty-eight, please your Majesty.' 'Only twenty-eight! What rank do you hold?' I replied, that I was only a Lieutenant in the Army, but that my situation was political. 'Oh, that I know. Really, sir,' commenced the King, 'you are a wonderful man; you have done more for me in this hour than any one has ever been able to do; you have pointed out everything to me. I now see why Lord William Bentinck places confidence in you; I had heard that you were an able man, but now I know you are most able. I trust in God that your life may be spared, that our Eastern Empire may benefit by the talents and abilities which you possess. You are entrusted with fearful information: you must take care what you publish. My ministers have been speaking of you to me, in particular Lord Grey. You will tell his Lordship and Mr. Grant all the conversation you have had with me, and you will tell them what I think upon the ambition of Russia. . . . I think, sir, that your sugges-

1833.

tions and those of Lord William Bentinck most profound; you will tell Lord William, when you return to India, of my great gratification at having met so intelligent a person as yourself, and my satisfaction at his Lordship's having brought these matters before the Cabinet. Lord Grey thinks as I do, that you have come home on a mission of primary importance—second only to the politics of Russia and Constantinople. . . . Lord Grey tells me that you have convinced him that our position in Russia is hopeless.' So continued King William. I felt quite overcome with his compliments. He then made me run over my early services, wondered only I was not a Lieutenant-Colonel if I had been an Assistant-Quartermaster-General, added that he saw sufficient reason for employing a man of my talents in the highest situation, and again hoped that I might be spared for my country's good. I replied to the King that I considered it a high honour to have had such confidential communication with his Majesty. He stopped me, and said that 'I have been quite unreserved, for I see and know you deserve it. I could say many things to you,' &c. &c. I have no more time to write. The King wore a blue coat with the ribbon of the Garter, and a narrow red ribbon round his neck, to which a cross was suspended. 'Good morning, sir; I am truly happy to have seen you. You don't go to India yet,' &c. &c. I took my departure, and, while threading the passages, a page ran after me, by desire of the King, to show me the Palace; but I had seen it."

He was now hard at work upon his book. He had written many lengthy and valuable official reports; but he had little experience of literary composition for a larger public than that of a bureaucracy, and he was wise enough to discern that the path to popular favour must be very cautiously trodden. Mistrusting his own critical judgment, he submitted portions of his work, before publication, to some more experienced friends, among whom were Mr. James Baillie Fraser and Mr. Mountstuart Elphinstone. The latter, not oblivious of his own early throes of literary labour, read the manuscript—painfully, in one sense, owing to the failure of his sight, but with the greatest interest and delight. "I never read anything," he wrote from his chambers in the Albany

1833.

to Alexander Burnes, "with more interest and pleasure; and although I cannot expect that every reader will be as much delighted as I have been, yet I shall have a bad opinion of the people's taste if the narrative is not received with general favour." But although Mr. Elphinstone bestowed these general praises on the work, he was fain to do his young friend good service by honestly criticising the work in detail. "I have made my remarks," he wrote, "with the utmost freedom, and the more so, because I hope you will not pay any attention to them when unsupported, but will be guided by the opinion of people who know the taste of this town, and who are familiar with criticism in general literature. I must premise that many of my objections are founded on general principles, and may, therefore, often be brought against passages which in themselves may be beautiful, but which lack the general effect to which you ought always to look. The first of these principles is, that a narrative of this kind should be in the highest degree plain and simple." The reader who has perused the preceding Memoir of Mr. Elphinstone, may remember how, in the preparation of his own book of travels, he had steadfastly adhered to this critical tenet; but whether naturally, or against nature, I do not undertake to say. My own impression is that he had brought his native instincts and appetencies to this state of critical subjection after sore trial and hard conflict, and that he spoke with the authority of a man who had wrestled down some besetting temptations. For naturally he was ardent, enthusiastic, imaginative; and when he first began to write for the public, he might have given way to the exuberance which he afterwards deprecated, if it had not been for the pruning-knife of his friend Richard Jenkins. Critically, he was doubtless right; but when he continued thus to enlarge upon the paramount duty of simplicity, perhaps he did not sufficiently remember that a "fastidious public" may be a small one. "To gain the confidence and good will of his reader," he said, "a traveller must be perfectly unaffected and unpretending. His whole object must seem to be to state what he has seen in the countries he has visited, without claiming the smallest superiority over his reader in any other description of knowledge or observation. For this reason, every unusual word, every

1833.

fine sentiment, every general reflection, and every sign of an ambitious style, should be carefully excluded." A hard lesson this for a young writer; and there was much more of the same kind; sound and excellent advice, altogether past dispute, and in accordance with the best critical canons. But Mr. Elphinstone lived to see these severe literary doctrines utterly set at naught by a younger race of writers—lived to see a "fastidious public" take to its heart *Eothen*, as the most popular book of travels ever published in modern times.

Nor was the only pruning-knife applied to the exuberance of the young writer that which was wielded by the experienced hand of such chastened writers as Mr. Elphinstone, the official knife was also applied to the manuscript in the Secret Department of the India House. This was, doubtless, in a literary sense, disadvantageous to the book; but, after undergoing these ordeals, it came out under the auspices of Mr. Murray; and Burnes had the honour of presenting a copy to the King at one of his Majesty's levees. "I know all about this," said the good-natured monarch, mindful of Burnes's visit to him at Brighton. The book was an undoubted success. It was well received by the critics and by the public, for not only was there something geographically new in it, but something also politically suggestive. The Russo-phobia was gaining ground in England. There were many who believed that the time was fast approaching when the Sepoy and the Cossack would meet, face to face, somewhere in Central Asia. It was a great thing, therefore, just in that momentous epoch, that some one should appear amongst us to whom the countries lying between the Indus and the Caspian were something more than places on the map. As the depository of so much serviceable information, Burnes was sure to be welcome everywhere. There was much, too, in the man himself to increase the interest which his knowledge of these strange countries excited. He was young in years, but younger still in appearance and in manner. When he said that he had been thirteen or fourteen years in India, Lord Munster said to him, "Why, that must have been nearly all your life." There was a charming freshness and naïveté about him—the reflexion, it may be said, of a warm, true heart, in which the home affections had never for a moment

1834.

been dormant. The greatest happiness which his success gave him was derived from the thought that it would give pleasure to his family, and might enable him to help them. He had striven in vain, and his father had striven also, through Sir John Malcolm and others, to obtain a cadetship for his brother Charles; but now this great object was readily obtainable, and the young man, who had been waiting so long for this promotion, received, as a just tribute to his brother, an appointment in the Bombay Army, which others' influence had failed to procure for him.

He remained at home until the spring of 1835; and then, with mingled feelings of hope and regret, he set his face again towards the East.* His sojourn in England had been attended by so many gratifying and flattering circumstances, that to one of his impressionable nature it must have been a continual delight from the first day to the last. Among other honours bestowed on him of which I have not spoken, it may be recorded here that he received the gold medal of our Geographical Society, and the silver medal of the Geographical Society of Paris, and that he was nominated, without ballot, a member of the Athenæum Club—an honour which has been described as the “Blue Riband of Literature.” In Paris, too, the *savans* of that enlightened city received him with as much enthusiasm as our own people. It would have been strange if, at his early age, his head had not been somewhat “turned” by all this success. But if it caused him to set a high value on his own services, it caused him also to strain his energies to the utmost not to disappoint the expectations which had been formed of him by others. A little youthful vanity is not a bad thing to help a man on in the world.

When Burnes returned to Bombay, he was ordered to rejoin his old appointment as assistant to the Resident in Cutch. In the course of the autumn he was despatched by Colonel Pottinger on a mission to Hyderabad, the capital of the Ameers of Sindh. “I am doomed,” he wrote, “to lead

* He went out overland in charge of despatches from the India House, and proceeded from Suez to Bombay in the *Hugh Lindsay* (pioneer) steamer, from which vessel he sent intelligence to Sir Charles Metcalfe that Lord Heytesbury had been appointed Governor-General of India.

1835. a vagabond life for ever; but all this is in my way, and I am in great spirits." But neither were his habits of so vagrant a character, nor the necessities of his work so engrossing, as to prevent him from thinking and writing about what has since been called the "Condition-of-India Question." He was very eager always for the moral elevation of the people, and he spoke with some bitterness of those who looked upon India merely as a preserve for the favoured European services. "Do not believe," he wrote to a friend, "that I wish to supersede Europeans by unfit natives. I wish gradually to raise their moral standard, now so low, for which we are, however, more to blame than themselves. Men will say, 'Wait till they are ready.' I can only reply, that if you wait till men are fit for liberty, you will wait for ever. Somewhere in the *Edinburgh Review* of days of yore, you will find this sentiment, which is mine: 'Will a man ever learn to swim without going into the water?' " After insisting on the duty of encouraging education by providing profitable employment for the educated classes, and declaring that we should thus soon cover the country with educated and thinking people, he continued in this letter from Hyderabad: "There is nothing here that I cannot support by history. Tacitus tells us a similar tale of our own ancestors, among whom Agricola sowed the seeds of greatness. That accomplished historian speaks of the superstitions of the Britons—of the ferocity of the hill tribes—of the degeneracy of those who had been subdued—of the want of union which had led to it—of the alacrity with which they paid their tribute, &c. &c. Change the name of Briton to Indian, and what have we but a sketch of this country under our present rule? And who are we? The descendants of those savages whom Agricola, by new and wise regulations, educated—we who are now glorious throughout the world." And again, a few months later, he wrote: "I look upon the services, one and all, as quite subservient to the great end of governing India; but I seldom meet with any one who looks upon India in any other light than as a place for those services, which is to me so monstrous, that I have, like Descartes, begun 'to doubt my own existence, seeing such doubt around me.' " He spoke of this with righteous indignation, but there was a tinge of exaggeration in his words; and he spoke some-

1836.

what too strongly even with reference to those times when he said that, "instead of raising up a glorious monument to our memory, we should impoverish India more thoroughly than Nadir, and become a greater curse to it than were the hordes of Timour."

But his services were now about to be demanded by the Government in a more independent position. Lord Auckland had proceeded to India as Governor-General. He had met Burnes at Bowood, had been pleased with his conversation, and had formed a high opinion of the energy and ability of the young subaltern. When, therefore, the first rude scheme of a pacific policy in the countries beyond the Indus took shape in his mind, he recognised at once the fact that Burnes must be one of its chief agents. So the Cutch Assistant was placed under the orders of the Supreme Government, and directed to hold himself in readiness to undertake what was described at the time, and is still known in history, as a "Commercial mission" to Caubul. Commerce, in the vocabulary of the East, is only another name for conquest. By commerce, the East India Company had become the sovereigns of the great Indian peninsula; and this commercial mission became the cloak of grave political designs. Very soon the cloak was thrown aside as an incumbrance, and, instead of directing his energies to the opening of the navigation of the Indus, the institution of fairs, and the opening of the new commercial routes through the Afghan and Beloochee countries, Alexander Burnes gave up his mind to the great work of check-mating Russia in the East.

"In the latter end of November, 1836, I was directed by the Governor-General of India, the Earl of Auckland, to undertake a mission to Caubul. Lieutenant (now Major) Robert Leech, of the Bombay Engineers, Lieutenant John Wood, of the Indian Navy, and Percival B. Lord, Esq., M.B., were appointed with me in the undertaking. The objects of Government were to work out its policy of opening the river Indus to commerce, and establishing on its banks and in the countries beyond it such relations as should contribute to the desired end. On the 26th of November we sailed from Bombay, and sighting the fine palace at Mandavee on the 6th of December, we finally landed in Sindh on the 13th of the

The commercial mission to Caubul.

1836.

month. Dr. Lord did not join our party till March." Such is the first page of a book written some years afterwards by Sir Alexander Burnes, in which he tells the story of this visit to Caubul, stripped of all its political apparel. Neither in its commercial nor its scientific aspects was it wholly a failure.* Burnes drew up a report on the trade of the Indus, and Wood wrote an excellent paper on its navigation; but events were developing themselves even faster than the ideas of the travellers; and commerce and science, though not wholly forgotten, soon dwindled into second-rate affairs.

Lord Auckland was not an ambitious man—quiet, sensible, inclined towards peace, he would not have given himself up to the allurements of a greater game, if he had not been stimulated, past all hope of resistance, by evil advisers, who were continually pouring into his ears alarming stories of deep-laid plots and subtle intrigues emanating from the Cabinet of St. Petersburg, and of the wide-spread corruption that was to be wrought by Russian gold. It was believed that the King of Persia had become the vassal of the great Muscovite monarch, and that he had been instigated by the Government of the Emperor to march an army to Herat for the capture of that famous frontier city, and for the further extension of his dominions towards the boundaries of our Indian Empire. The attack upon Herat was a substantial fact; the presence of Russian officers in the Persian territory, as aiders and abettors of the siege of Herat, was also a fact. The dangers which were apprehended were essentially very similar to those which had alarmed us more than a quarter of a century before, and which had caused the despatch of Mr. Elphinstone's mission to Afghanistan. But there were some

* Lord Auckland, it should be stated, received this as a legacy from Lord William Bentinck, with whom Burnes had been in communication in India, and in correspondence during his residence in England. Whilst at home, Burnes had ceaselessly impressed on the King's Ministers, as well as on the Directors of the Company, the importance of not neglecting, either in their commercial or their political aspects, the countries beyond the Indus; and some of his letters, written at this time, give interesting accounts of his inter-

views with Lord Grey, Mr. Charles Grant, Lord Lansdowne, and other statesmen, on this favourite subject. In one letter to Lord William Bentinck, he wrote that Lord Grey took a too European view of the question, and considered it chiefly "in connexion with the designs of Russia towards Constantinople;" whilst Lord Lansdowne, having "a mind cast in so noble a mould, looked with more interest on the great future of human society than on our immediate relations with those countries."

1837.

circumstantial differences. Not only had the Russian power taken the place of the French in the great drama of intrigue and aggression, but another actor had appeared upon the scene to take the leading business at Caubul. There had been a revolution, or a succession of revolutions, in Afghanistan. The Suddozye King, Shah Soojah, whom Elphinstone had met at Peshawur, was now a pensioner in the British dominions, and the Barukzye chief, Dost Mahomed, was dominant at Caubul.

This was the man who, in the autumn of 1837, welcomed the English gentlemen to his capital. "On the 20th of September," wrote Burnes in his published book, "we entered Caubul, and were received with great pomp and splendour by a fine body of Afghan cavalry, led by the Ameer's son, Akbar Khan. He did me the honour to place me upon the same elephant on which he himself rode, and conducted us to his father's court, whose reception of us was most cordial. A spacious garden close to the palace, and inside the Balla Hissar of Caubul, was allotted to the mission as their place of residence. On the 21st of September we were admitted to a formal audience by Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan, and I then delivered to him my credentials from the Governor-General of India. His reception of them was all that could be desired. I informed him that I had brought with me, as presents to his Highness, some of the rarities of Europe; he promptly replied that we ourselves were the rarities, the sight of which best pleased him." But neither the presents nor the promises, which Burnes was allowed to make to the Afghans, were of a character that could much gratify them. The fact is, that we sought much, and that we granted little. Dost Mahomed was at this time greatly perplexed and embarrassed. Alarmed by the attitude of the Sikhs on the one side,* and of the Persians on the other, he looked to the English for support and assistance in his troubles. But weeks passed away, and weeks grew into months. The English gentlemen remained at Caubul, but he could extract no comfort from them; and, in

* Whilst Burnes and his companion had been moving onward from Sindh to Afghanistan through Beloochistan and the Punjab, the Sikhs and Afghans had been fighting for Peshawur. In May a great battle was fought at Jumrood, in which the Sikhs were victorious. The disturbed state of the country had delayed the progress of the Mission.

1837—38. the mean while, a Russian agent had appeared upon the scene, less chary of his consolations. "To the East," said Burnes, "the fears of Dost Mahomed were allayed; to the West they were increased. In this state of things his hopes were so worked upon, that the ultimate result was his estrangement from the British Government."

It was our policy to secure the good offices of the Ameer, and it was the duty of Alexander Burnes to accomplish the object. Left to himself, he would have done it. He, who best knew Dost Mahomed, had most faith in him. The Ameer was eager for the British alliance, and nothing was easier than to secure his friendship. But whilst Burnes was striving to accomplish this great object at Caubul, other counsels were prevailing at Simlah—that great hotbed of intrigue on the Himalayan hills—where the Governor-General and his secretaries were refreshing and invigorating themselves, and rising to heights of audacity which they never might have reached in the languid atmosphere of Calcutta. They conceived the idea of reinstituting the old deposed dynasty of Shah Soojah, and they picked him out of the dust of Loodhianah to make him a tool and a puppet, and with the nominal aid of Runjeet Singh, who saw plainly that we were making a mistake which might be turned to his advantage, they determined to replace the vain, weak-minded exile, whom his country had cast out as a hissing and a reproach, on the throne of Afghanistan. It is enough to state the fact. The policy was the policy of the Simlah Cabinet, with which Burnes had nothing to do. It was rank injustice to Dost Mahomed. It was rank injustice to Alexander Burnes. The young English officer, who had been twice the guest of the Barukzye Sirdars of Caubul, who had led them to believe that his Government would support them, and who had good and substantial reason to believe that they would be true to the English alliance, now found that he was fearfully compromised by the conduct of his official superiors. He left Caubul, and made his way to Simlah; and it is said that the secretaries received him with eager entreaties not to spoil the "great game" by dissuading Lord Auckland from the aggressive policy to which he had reluctantly given his consent.

The Simlah cabinet.

This was in the summer of 1838. Even if the young Bombay officer could have spoken with "the tongue of angels,"

1838.

his words would have been too late. What could he do against a triumvirate of Bengal civilians—the ablest and most accomplished in the country? It is true that he had an intimate acquaintance, practical, personal, with the politics of Afghanistan, whilst all that they knew was derived from the book that he had written, from the writings of Mountstuart Elphinstone, and from another book of travels written by a young cavalry officer named Arthur Conolly, of whom I shall presently give some account in this volume. But they had had the ear of the Governor-General whilst Burnes had been working at Caubul; and so their crude theories prevailed against his practical knowledge. He was not, however, a man of a stubborn and obstinate nature, or one who could work out, with due ministerial activity, only the policy which he himself favoured. It is the sorest trial of official life to be condemned to execute measures, which you have neither recommended nor approved, and then to be identified with them as though they were your own. But every good public servant must consent to bear this burden with all becoming resignation and humility. The State could not be efficiently served, if every subordinate servant were to assume to himself the right of independent judgment. Burnes would have supported Dost Mahomed from the first, but when it was decreed that Shah Soojah should be supported, Burnes endeavoured to reconcile himself to the policy, and did his best to render it successful.* What his views were may be

* From Simlah he wrote on the 10th of September, 1838, saying: "I implored the Government to act. His Lordship lauded me for my abilities, &c., but thought I was travelling too fast, and would do nothing. Matters got worse hourly. Letters from Russian agents, promising everything to the Afghan chiefs, fell into my hands. I founded on them further remonstrances at the supineness of Government; their eyes were opened; they begged of me to hold on at Caubul if I could; but I knew my duty better to my country, for meanwhile Russian good offices had been accepted to the exclusion of the British, and I struck my flag and returned to India, saying: 'Behold what your tardiness has done!' You might think disgrace would follow such proceedings: far from it—they applauded my vigour, and twenty thousand men are now under orders to do what a word might have done earlier, and two mil-

lions of money must be sunk in what I offered to do for two lakhs! How came this about? Persia has been urged by Russia to attack Herat and invade India. Poor Dost Mahomed is afraid of the Sikhs on one side, and of Persia on the other. Russia guaranteed him against Persia, and thus he clung to her instead of us. Sagacity might have led him to act otherwise, but he was placed in difficult circumstances, and we augmented his difficulties. In the dilemma they asked my views. I replied: 'Self-defence is the first law of nature. If you cannot bring round Dost Mahomed, whom you have used infamously, you must set up Shah Soojah as a puppet, and establish a supremacy in Afghanistan, or you will lose India.' This is to be done, and we have drawn closer to Runjeet Singh, who has feathered his nest in our dilemma, and kept all his Afghan country, under our promise of support."

1838.

gathered from the following letter, which he wrote to Sir John Hobhouse, in December, 1838: "The retreat of the Persians from Herat has been to us all most gratifying intelligence, but the subsequent proceedings of the Shah raise up in my mind the strongest doubt of our having brought his Majesty to reason, or done aught but to postpone the evil day for a time. The frontier fortress of Afghanistan—Ghorian—is still garrisoned by Persian troops, and besides a messenger on the part of the Shah now at Candahar and Caubul, the Russian officer, Captain Vicovitch, is at Candahar, and has already distributed 10,000 ducats among the chiefs who have called out their retainers, and are now on their route to invest Herat. The Russian declares on all occasions that Mahomed Shah will return, and that the money he distributes is not Russian gold, but that of the Shah; and further, that if Herat falls into their hands, the Russians will then lead the Afghans to the Attock (Indus). After the gallant defence made by Herat, it might not appear at all possible that the chiefs of Candahar should capture it with their rabble band; but still I have some apprehensions, as well from the reduced and dilapidated state of Herat itself, as from its being now about to be invested by Afghans. In their wars, victory is decided by defection. The minister of Herat is unpopular, and he will not be able to rouse the courage of his people by their fighting against the enemies of their religion, as were the Sheeah Persians. On the raising of the siege of Herat, I wrote at once to Lieutenant Pottinger, sending him 20,000 rupees, and telling him 'to draw on me for such a sum as is indispensable to place the walls of Herat in a state of repair, and relieve its suffering inhabitants from want,' and I have received the Governor-General's sanction to send him a lakh of rupees; but in a subsequent part of this letter I will point out that we ought to make much larger sacrifices than this, and as Lord Auckland does not as yet know of the extent of this new Russian intrigue, I shall, without hesitation, cash any bill from Herat for money expended as I have stated. Till I received very precise accounts of Vicovitch's proceedings, I could not unravel the object of his intrigue, but I have had a practical proof of it within this week from the chief of Khelat, the first ruler we shall encounter on our way to Candahar, and through whose territory is the great Pass of Bolan.

1838.

To an invitation sent to this person to co-operate with us, from Lord Auckland, Shah Soojah, and myself, he tells me that he is a friend, and will do all that is wished, but that he wants certain territories restored to him; that he supports the Shah only to oblige us, and that the chief of Candahar had offered him a part of the Russian gold now and hereafter to side with him. As an alliance between Candahar and Khelat is perfectly out of the question, and Mehrab Khan's (the chief is so called) pretensions, if allowed to take root, would involve serious embarrassment, I have plainly told him that he is either to be a friend or a foe, and I have little doubt that all will go right with him. But it is not the small chiefship of Khelat or its petty politics that would lead me to trouble you with an introduction of them. What is to be said to a regular train of proof now brought to light of Russian intrigue from Khelat to Kokund, or from the sea to the northern portion of Cashmere! It is clear, and appears to me imperative on the British Government to spare neither expense nor labour to supplant this growing influence. It is, therefore, with every satisfaction that I see the Governor-General resolved upon carrying through his measures, even though Herat be relieved, for we can have no security for the future without rearing a solid fabric westward of the Indus. Our policy there for the last thirty years has been so supine and full of reserve, that we have to thank ourselves only for the evils that have accumulated. It is not fitting in me to say things of what might have been so easily done by us in Caubul and Candahar last year, since, however much the loss of that opportunity is to be regretted, the basis of the present war is self-defence, the first law of nature. On that stable ground the Government can and must defend its measures, and if sympathy and faction united raise up a party to side with Dost Mahomed Khan, they may paint with much colour the hardship of his case (and it is a very hard one), but all faction must sink before the irrefragable evidence that our Indian Empire is endangered by a further perseverance in our late and inert policy. But supposing our plans for placing Shah Soojah on the throne of his ancestors to succeed, it is evident that we shall have a strong under-current of intrigue to work up against, and that Russia will now add to her former means of intriguing through the

1838.

Persians in Afghanistan, the unseated rulers of Caubul and Candahar. All our energies will, therefore, be called forth, for I consider Persia to be as much subject to Russia as India is to Britain, and we must make up our minds to oppose her, face to face, on the Afghan frontier. My journey to Bokhara in 1832 served to convince me that Russia had ulterior designs eastward, which I expressed as firmly as I believed, but it was not the policy of the day to check them. I did not think that her progress and intrigues would have been so rapid as they have been, and I then believed that we might have injured Russia in these countries by giving encouragement to the Indus commerce and founding fairs, but all these hopes are now vain, without the display of physical power aiding our moral influence. I have urged Lord Auckland to fortify Herat on the principles most approved by engineers. I will give the same advice with reference to Candahar when it falls to us, and I hope in the course of a month to have received from the chief of Northern Sindh (to whose Court I am accredited as Envoy) the fortress of Bukkur. The grand line of route will thus be in our hands, and at Caubul itself we shall have a strong government by supporting the Shah, and a good pledge for his continued friendship in the British officers we have placed in his service."

Sindh and
Beloochistan.

When it was determined by Lord Auckland's Government that a great army should be assembled for the invasion of Afghanistan and the restoration of Shah Soojah to the throne of Caubul, the army was to march by the way of the Bolan Pass, through the country ruled by the Ameers of Sindh, and Burnes was to be sent forward to make all necessary arrangements for the passage of our army through those little known and difficult regions to Candahar. If he had formed any expectation of being vested with the supreme political control of the expedition, and afterwards of representing British interests at the Court of Shah Soojah, they were not unreasonable expectations. But Mr. Macnaghten was appointed "Envoy and Minister" at Caubul, whilst Captain Burnes, in the vice-regal programme having no assured place, was to be employed as a wayside emissary. But the sharpness of his disappointment was mitigated by the receipt of letters announcing that the Queen had taken his services into gracious consideration, and had made him a Knight, with the military rank of Lieutenant-

1838.

Colonel. This sent him about his work with better heart, and he brought all his energies to bear upon the important duty of smoothing the road for the march of the army of the Indus, and the procession of the restored Suddozye monarch into the heart of the country, which never wanted him, and which he was wholly incompetent to govern.

Nor were these the only gratifying circumstances which raised his spirits at this time. He found that the policy which he would have worked out in Afghanistan, though thwarted by the Simlah Cabinet, had found favour in high places at home. Lord Auckland himself frankly acknowledged this, and generously afforded Burnes full license to enjoy his victory. "I enclose a letter from the Governor-General himself," wrote Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Alexander Burnes, from Shikarpore, on the 4th of December, "which is a document very dear to me, and which I told Lord Auckland I prized as high as the honours themselves. The fact is, I have been playing the boldest game a man ever dared. I differed entirely with the Governor-General as to his policy in Afghanistan, told him it would ruin us, cost the nation millions, when a few lakhs now would keep off Russia. They would not be guided by me, and sent me a laudatory wig (reprimand), and as sure as I had been a prophet, my predictions are verified. Russia is upon us, and the Home Government has pronounced me right and his Lordship wrong! This is the greatest hit I have made in life. Seeing how they had mismanaged all things, they asked my advice; but, like all timid politicians, they ran from one extreme to another. An army was necessary, but not so large an army. However, I told Lord Auckland I should do all I could to work out his views, and am doing so. The declaration of war you will see in the papers, and how much has come out of my mission to Caubul."*

* The following is the text of Lord Auckland's letter: "Simlah, Nov. 5, 1838.—My dear Sir,—I cordially congratulate you on the public proofs of approbation with which you have been marked at home. My private letters speak in high terms of your proceedings at Caubul, and I may in candour mention that upon the one point upon which there was some difference between

us—the proposed advance of money to Candahar—opinions for which I have the highest respect, are in your favour. I do not grudge you this, and am only glad that a just tribute has been paid to your ability and indefatigable zeal. The superscription of this letter will, in case you have not received direct accounts, explain my meaning to you.—Yours, very faithfully, AUCKLAND."

1838—39.

At this time Burnes was employed on a mission to the Ameers of Sindh, with the object of smoothing the way for the advance of the British army, which was to march, by way of the Bolan Pass, to Candahar and Caubul. It was not work that could be accomplished without some harshness and injustice; and there are indications in his correspondence that he did not much like the course, which he was compelled to pursue, in dealing with Meer Roostum of Khyrpore, from whom the cession of Bukkur was to be obtained. But he had a natural taste for diplomacy, and the issues of success sometimes so dazzled his eyes, that he did not see very clearly the true nature of the means of accomplishment. "I have been travelling to Khyrpore," he wrote to Percival Lord, on New Year's-day, 1839, "treaty-making on a great scale, and, what is well, carrying all before me. I have got the fortress of Bukkur ceded to us on our own terms (which are, that we are to hold it now and during war)—the Khyrpore State to place itself under British protection; and a clause has been inserted in my treaty paving the way for the abolition of all tolls on the Indus! Huzza! See how old Roostum and his minister (the *Boree*, as you christened him) have cut up. You did not expect such a *chef-d'œuvre* as this, which is a fit ending to the Caubul mission, since by Bukkur the Macedonians bridled the neighbouring nations. All these great doings happened at Christmas, and I wanted your hilarious tones to make the enjoyment of the day complete."

There was other work, too, for him at this time—other treaties to be thrust down the throats of the Sindh Ameers. Higher up, along the line of our advancing army, Mehrab Khan of Khelat was to be brought to terms. Burnes, who was officially "Envoy to the Chief of Khelat or other States," was, of course, sent forward to negotiate the desired treaty, and to obtain, from the Chief, supplies for the troops who were passing through his territory. But they had already devastated his country; there was no grain to be had, and all the food that could be supplied to our army consisted of some ill-fed sheep. "The English," said Mehrab Khan to Burnes, "have come, and by their march through my country, in different directions, destroyed the crops, poor as they were, and have helped themselves to the water that irrigated my

1839.

lands, made doubly valuable in this year of scarcity." "I might have allied myself," he added, "with Persia and Russia; but I have seen you safely through the great defile of the Bolan, and yet I am unrewarded." The reward he sought was, that he might be relieved for ever from the mastery of the Suddozye kings; but, instead of this, it was made a condition of any kind of peaceable negotiation with him, that he should pay homage to Shah Soojah in his camp. Reluctantly bowing to the hard necessity, he consented, and the treaty was sealed. The English undertook to pay him an annual subsidy of a lakh and a half of rupees, in return for which he was to do his best to obtain supplies for us, and to keep open the passes for our convoys. Burnes saw clearly that he had to deal in this instance with a man of great shrewdness and ability. He was warned by the chief that the expedition on which the English had embarked had the seeds of failure within it. "The Khan," wrote Burnes to Macnaghten, "with a good deal of earnestness, enlarged upon the undertaking the British had embarked in; declared it to be one of vast magnitude and difficult accomplishment; that instead of relying on the Afghan nation, our Government had cast them aside, and inundated the country with foreign troops; that if it was our end to establish ourselves in Afghanistan, and give Shah Soojah the nominal sovereignty of Caubul and Candahar, we were pursuing an erroneous course; that all the Afghans were discontented with the Shah, and all Mahomedans alarmed and excited at what was passing; that day by day men returned discontented, and we might find ourselves awkwardly situated if we did not point out to Shah Soojah his errors, if the fault originated with him, and alter them if they sprung from ourselves; that the chief of Caubul (Dost Mahomed) was a man of ability and resource, and though we could easily put him down by Shah Soojah even in our present mode of procedure, we could never win over the Afghan nation by it." Truer words than these were seldom spoken; and often, doubtless, as events developed themselves in Afghanistan, did Burnes think over the warnings of that ill-fated Khelat chief.

How the British army entered Afghanistan, how Dost Mahomed was driven out of the country, how the people for a

The invasion
of Afghanistan.

1839.

while sullenly acquiesced in the revolution, which was accomplished by the force of British bayonets and the influence of British gold, are matters which belong to history. The further we advanced, the more difficult became the solution of the question, "What is to be done with Sir Alexander Burnes?" At one time there was some thought of his going to Herat, but this was abandoned. On the 18th of June, he wrote from Candahar to one of his brothers, saying: "In possession of Candahar, the affairs of Herat first engaged our attention, and I was nominated to proceed there with guns and money to make a treaty. After being all ready to go, Macnaghten announced his intention of going back to Simlah, and suggested my going on to Caubul to take charge of the mission. When he went, I at once chose to go to Caubul, for the policy of Government in Herat affairs I do not like. A King at Caubul and another at Herat are 'two Kings at Brentford,' from which I foresee serious evils. I wished them to put all under Shah Soojah, but after Stoddart had been ejected, young Pottinger allowed himself to be apologised to for their threatening to murder him, and the opportunity was lost. The wretches have again quarrelled with Pottinger, and cut off a hand of one of his servants; but this also is for the present made up, and Major Todd starts tomorrow for Herat, and I predict can do nothing, for nothing is to be done with them. Kamran is an imbecile, and the Minister, Yar Mahomed, is a bold but doubtful man. . . . The King and I are great friends, but I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that he has nothing in common with the chief of Caubul. But he is legitimate, and that is a great point; and we are to keep him on the throne, so that I think things will go much better than is generally believed."

Occupation of
Afghanistan.

Shah Soojah was restored to the Balla Hissar of Caubul, and Sir Alexander Burnes settled down into a most anomalous and unsatisfactory position. He had no power and no responsibility. He gave advice which was seldom taken, and he saw things continually going wrong without any power to set them right. It is impossible to conceive any more unpleasant situation than that which for more than two years—during the latter part of 1839, and all through 1840 and 1841—he occupied at the Court of Caubul. If, at that time, he had not

1839.

been sometimes irritable, and sometimes desponding, he would have been more or less than a man. He had been taught to believe that Macnaghten had been sent only for a little space into Afghanistan, to be soon removed to a higher office, and then that he himself would be placed in the supreme direction of affairs. But month after month—nay, year after year—passed, and there was no change; and Burnes began to write somewhat bitterly of the good faith of the Governor-General, and to contrast his conduct with the soft words of the man who had spoken so kindly and encouragingly to him on the “couch at Bowood.” His correspondence at this time reflects, as in a glass, a mind altogether unsettled, if not discontented. He wanted active, stirring work; and, save on rare occasions, there was little or none for him. He was disappointed, too, and perhaps somewhat embittered; for a great crop of honours had resulted from this invasion of Afghanistan. Sir John Keane had been made a Peer, and Mr. Macnaghten a Baronet; and Burnes thought that his just claim to further distinction had been ignored. He might have been reconciled to this, for his own honours were of very recent growth, if the Governor-General had placed him in a position of dignity and responsibility. But there was really nothing to be done for the Political Second-in-command. It was at one time discussed whether he might not be appointed “Resident at Candahar;” but this scheme was abandoned; and at last Burnes came to the conclusion that it was his special mission to receive three thousand rupees a month for the mere trouble of drawing the money.

There was not one of his correspondents to whom he unburdened himself so freely as to his friend Percival Lord (then employed in the neighbourhood of Bameean, near the Hindoo-Koosh), to whom he wrote freely, alike on Afghan politics and on his own personal position. A few illustrative extracts from this correspondence may be given here: “Caulbul, November 2, 1839. I have been expecting to hear from you on this astounding intelligence from Turkistan. I have letters from Nazir Khan Oollah that leave no doubt of the Russians having come to Khiva, or being on the road there. Have they ulterior views or not? Is Herat their end, or Bokhara? It is evident that your presence is required at Bokhara, but

1839.

that cannot be in the present distracted state of the country ; native agency must be employed, and more than spies. Macnaghten has, therefore, resolved on sending Mahomed Hoosein Karkee to tell the King that his proceedings in not answering our letters, in threatening our cossids, in fearing Shah Soojah, are all wrong, with much other matter of that kind. The officials you will get all in due time, but this is to give you notice that Karkee is coming to you to get his final instructions. He is a clever fellow, and has killed his pig with the Dost and the King of Persia, so there is no fear of his taking their part. He may be bribed by Russia, but that we cannot help, and it is but right to give the King of Bokhara a chance. I wish to God you could go yourself, and I know Lord A. wishes it, but he declares that the country is not safe, and that, after Stoddart's fate, he has a great reluctance to put our officers in what the Field-Marshal would call a false position. I for one believe in all the reports of the advance of Russia. Of course her fifty regiments may be but ten ; but we had better look out, seeing the Dost is loose, and Herat with its walls unprepared. As a precautionary measure, the Bombay column will be halted after Khelat is settled, till we see what turns up——” “November 10. Old Toorkistanee as you are, you seem to be quite quiescent about the Russian movement in Orgunje, and do not, I imagine from your silence, believe it, but I assure you it is a serious business. I have a letter from Herat twenty-seven days old confirming it, and giving particulars about the Vizier, Yar Mahomed Khan, being tampered with by the Russians, all of which seems to have been concealed from Todd. I am most anxious to hear further, and have sent a Hindoo on to Khiva itself, who will pass through your camp in a day or two. I have letters from London explanatory of Vicovitch's death, which Count Nesselrode writes to Lord Palmerston was annoying them, as the Russian Government had blamed Simonich, and not Vicovitch——” “November 22. Here is a curious anecdote for you ; let me have your opinion. A couple of years before our mission arrived at Caubul, Vicovitch (the true Vicovitch) came to Bokhara, called at Ruheem Shah's relative's house, and asked him to send letters to Masson at Caubul for MM. Allard and Vutura. The King of Bokhara took offence at Vicovitch's presence, and

the Koosh-Begee sent him off sharp. So the letters were never sent. This shows an earlier intention to intrigue on the part of Russia ; but how came Masson not to report this, and if he reported it, how came he to give, years afterwards, twenty-one reasons for Vicovitch not being what he was ? I cannot unravel this. I once spoke of this before to you, and to no other man——” “ December 13. How can I say things go wrong ? Sheets of foolscap are written in praise of the Shah’s contingent, and, as God is my judge, I tremble every time I hear of its being employed that it will compromise its officers. You cannot, then, imagine I would ever advocate a weak and yet undisciplined corps garrisoning Bameean. Your remark about employing Afghans in Koonee and Khyber, as you may well imagine, agrees with my own views, but I am not the Envoy. I see European soldiers sent to look after Khyberees, and as well might they be sent after wild sheep. I see, what is worse, Craigie’s corps sent after the disaffected at Koonee, when they are not yet drilled, and when Afghans are quite up to the work. From all this I see that Shah Soojah never can be left without a British army, for his own contingent will never be fit for anything——” “ January 7, 1840. I will send you a letter from Lord Auckland to me, wishing again to make me Resident at Candahar, but not to go there unless it ‘pleased’ me. I replied to Macnaghten that this useless correspondence had been going on since August, and it was high time to do what had been proposed—to give me Resident’s pay. Imprisoning rupees and reading are now my engagements, and I have begun the year with a resolution of making no more suggestions, and of only speaking when spoken to. I do not say this in ill humour—quite the reverse. A screw from Machiavelli supports me. ‘A man who, instead of acting for the best, acts *as he ought*, seeks rather his ruin than his preservation’——” “ January 11. Lord Auckland took a step in sending an army into this country contrary to his own judgment, and he cares not a sixpence what comes of the policy, so that he gets out of it. All the despatches plainly prove this ; and Macnaghten now begins to see his own false position, suggests remedies, and finds himself for the first time snubbed by the very Governor-General whose letters have been hitherto a fulsome tissue of praise. The Envoy sees that

1840.

Russia is coming on, that Herat is not what it ought to have been—ours, and his dawning experience tells him that, if not for us, it is against us. What says Lord Auckland? ‘I disagree with you. Yar Mahomed is to be conciliated. Russia is friendly to England, and I do not credit her advance on us, though she may have an expedition against Khiva. I wonder,’ adds his Lordship to the Envoy, ‘that you should countenance attacks on Herat contrary to treaty’ (who made that treaty? Macnaghten!); ‘that you should seek for more troops in Afghanistan. It is your duty to rid Afghanistan of troops.’ All very fine, but mark the result—calamity, loss of influence, and with it loss of rupees. In these important times, what occupies the King and this Envoy? The cellars of his Majesty’s palace have been used as powder-magazines to prevent a mosque being ‘desecrated.’ They would have been put in the citadel, but his Majesty objected, as they overlooked his harem! This objection dire necessity has removed, and to the citadel they have gone. Read the enclosures, and see what is said of Colonel Dennie’s occupying, not the palace, but a house outside, held formerly by sweepers and Hindoos! From this, in the midst of winter, though Brigadier, he has been ejected; but he declares before God that it shall be the Governor-General alone who turns him out. These are the occupations of the King and Envoy. See what Sir W. Cotton says of it. In Persia, in Egypt, in Muscat, the guests of the Sovereigns occupy palaces, and Shah Soojah declares he will resign his throne if he be so insulted—insulted by the contamination of those men who bled for him and placed him where he is. What, my dear Lord, do I mean by all this? *Ex uno disce omnes*. Be silent, pocket your pay, do nothing but what you are ordered, and you will give high satisfaction. They will sacrifice you and me, or any one, without caring a straw. This does not originate from vice, I believe, but from ignorance. Drowning men catch at straws, and whenever anything goes wrong, other backs must bear the brand. An *exposé* of the policy from the day we were bound hand and foot at Lahore, till Shah Soojah threatened to resign his throne because of the cellars of his palace being occupied by munitions of war when Russia was on the Oxus, would make a book which all future diplomatists could never in blunder surpass; but why should

1840.

it be otherwise? The chief priest, ere he started, asked if Khiva were on the Indus! Bah! I blame the Governor-General for little; if he is a timid man, he is a good man. W. hoodwinked him about Caubul when I was here; another now hoodwinks him. The one cost us two millions, the other will cost us ten. His Lordship has just written to me to give him my say on public matters. Am I a fool? He does not want truth; he wants support, and when I can give it I shall do so loudly; when I cannot, I shall be silent——” “Jan. 26. They have been at me again to write ‘on the prospects of the restored Government,’ as I think I told you before. I am no such gaby. If they really wanted truth, I would give it cordially, but it is a chiming-in—a coincidence of views which they seek; and I can go a good way, but my conscience has not so much stretch as to approve of this dynasty. But, mum—let that be between ourselves——” “Feb. 18. The Envoy is, or pretends to be, greatly annoyed at my being left out of the list of the honoured, and has written four letters on it; three to me, and one to Nicolson. I am not in the least surprised. Every month brings with it proofs of Lord A.’s hostility or dislike. Serves me right. I ought never to have come here, or allowed myself to be pleased with fair though false words. As a sample, look; they burked the paragraph on me in Sir John (Baron) Keane’s despatch because I was a political. Next fight at Khelat, the paragraph on the political Bean is printed. I bide my time, and I may be set down as highly presumptuous; but if I live, I expect to be a G.C.B. instead of a C.B.——” “February 28. You tell me to accept the Residency at Candahar; it is well I refused it. The Court of Directors have officially sanctioned it, and Lord Auckland says I am to have Resident’s pay, but to be Political Agent! Did you ever? However, my refusal had gone in, backed by Macnaghten, and they make me *Resident at Caubul*, but I expect nothing from them after such base ingratitude. The reasons why I refused Candahar were, that I should be as dependent there as here, with a certainty of collision in Herat affairs, over which I was to have ‘some control.’ Now I could not have had that without making my silence my dishonesty, and I resolved on ‘biding my time’ here. I have heard no more of the Shah’s move to Candahar;

1840.

it is necessary on many accounts ; but it may not take place on that account——” “ March 4. There is no two days' fixity of purpose—no plan of future policy, external or internal, on which you can depend a week. The bit-by-bit system prevails. Nothing comprehensive is looked to ; the details of the day suffice to fill it up, and the work done is not measured by its importance, but by being work, and this work consists of details and drawing money. We are in a fair way of proving all Mr. Elphinstone said in his letter to me, and I for one begin to think Wade will be the luckiest of us all to be away from the break-down ; for, unless a new leaf is turned over, break down we shall.”

Though condemned thus painfully to official inactivity, the restless spirit of Alexander Burnes was continually embracing all the great questions which the antagonism of England and Russia in Central Asia were then throwing up for practical solution. He had made up his own mind very distinctly upon the subject. He somewhat exaggerated the aggressive designs of Russia ; but, starting from such premises, he was logically right in contending that our best policy was to strengthen ourselves in Afghanistan, and not to endeavour either to oppose by arms or to baffle by diplomacy the progress of the Muscovite in Central Asia. There were other British officers, however, in the Afghan dominions at that time, who, thinking less of Russian aggressiveness and more of Central Asian provocations, felt that much good might be effected by peaceful mediation—especially by the good work of endeavouring to liberate the Russian subjects, who had been carried off into slavery by the man-stealers of those barbarous States.* It remained for a later generation to endorse these views, and to believe that England and Russia might act harmoniously together in Central Asia in the interests of universal humanity. Very steadfastly and persistently did Burnes set his face against them. His own opinions were stated most emphatically in letters, which he addressed to Sir William Macnaghten in this year : “ I have just received your very interesting letter of the 13th,” he wrote to the Envoy, on the 16th of April, “ with its enclosure, an extract from the Governor-General's

* I touch but cursorily on this subject here, because it will be illustrated more fully in subsequent Memoirs of Arthur Conolly and D'Arcy Todd.

1840.

letter regarding the designs of Russia. I now feel somewhat at ease since his Lordship has become cognisant of the real state of affairs on our frontier, as we shall no longer be acting on a blind reliance that the expedition to Khiva was small, and would be unsuccessful, when it is an army composed of the élite of their empire, and has made good its lodgment on the delta of the Oxus. After the Punic faith which Russia has exhibited, I confess I was astonished to see Lord Clanricarde put trust in what Count Nesselrode told him of the strength of the Russian force, and you may rely upon it that we are better judges of what Russia is doing in Turkistan than our ambassador at St. Petersburg, and I hope the correctness of all our information from first to last will now lead to the most implicit reliance being hereafter placed upon it. One correspondent may exaggerate and distort, but it is not in the nature of falsehood to be consistent; and of inconsistency we have had none, the cry being that Russia has entered Turkistan with the design of setting up her influence there, and that (whether her ruler or ministers admit it or not) her object is to disturb us in Afghanistan. European intelligence confirms all this; and with a failing peculiarly her own, Russia has, for the present, left the Turkish question to be settled by England and France, and even in her generosity agreed to open the Black Sea. ‘Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.’ Firmly impressed with these views, they tincture all my thoughts and opinions, and, in consequence, lead me to hope that our every nerve will be strained to consolidate Afghanistan, and that nothing of any kind, political or military, may take place beyond the passes. Had we force sufficient, the occupation of Balkh might not be a bad military move, and one which would, in truth, show ‘an imposing attitude;’ but with Russia at Khiva, and negotiating for the residence of a permanent ambassador at Bokhara, we shall at once precipitate a collision with her by such a step, and with our present force I consider it hopeless, even if our rear were clear, which it is not. The attitude of the Sikhs towards us is that of undisguised hostility, and on both our front and rear we have cause for deep reflection—I will not say alarm, for I do not admit it; we have only to play the good game we have begun, and exhibit Shah Soojah as the real King, to triumph over our dif-

1840.

difficulties. The security from that triumph, however, is not an advance to Turkistan, but first a quieting of our rear, and redress of grievances at home. You will guess, then, what I think of any of our officers going in any capacity to Turkistan, to Khiva, Bokhara, or Kokund. I regarded Abbott's departure to Khiva as the most unhappy step taken during the campaign, and his language at Khiva, which will all be repeated to Russia, places us in a position far more equivocal than Russia was placed in by Vicovitch being here. We had no ground of complaint against Dost Mahomed (till he joined our enemies), and two great European powers merely wished for his friendship; but Russia has at Khiva just grounds for complaint, and still Captain Abbott tells the Khan that he must have no communication with Russia, but release her slaves, and have done with her. It is well to remember that Russia has extensive trade passing through Khiva, and that the proclamation of war declares that the object of the expedition is to redress the merchants for exactions. Is England to become security for barbarous hordes some thousands of miles from her frontier? If not, Captain Abbott's promises and speeches must compromise us. I observe you proceed on the supposition that Russia wants only her slaves released, but this is one of ten demands only; and instead of our language, therefore, being pertinent on that head, that we insist on her relief, it means nothing, for Captain Abbott tells us that the Khan had offered to release them all, and I know that the King of Bokhara has made a treaty to that effect, and acts up to it; for Captain A. likewise confirms the information frequently reported, that the King there is bought by Russia. We have in consequence, I think, no business in Khiva, and, however much we may wish it, none in Bokhara. The remaining State is Kokund, and we shall know the probable good of a connexion with it. In my letter to A. Conolly, I enclosed some 'observations on sending a mission to Khiva,' but I did not then discuss the policy of the King. I merely, in reply to Conolly's request for hints, pointed out the difficulties of the road and of communication when there. But my first question is the *cui bono* of this mission in a political point of view? In a geographical one, no one can doubt its high expediency. What are we to get from

1840.

it? Nothing, I see, but to attach to ourselves just and deserved reproach for interfering with Russia in ground already occupied by her merchants, and ground far beyond our own line of operations. The measure will irritate Russia, who will at once march on Balkh to assert her just position, as she calls it, in Central Asia; and then, indeed, the Governor-General's surmises will be proved. It will give uneasiness to 'all surrounding States, and add difficulty to the game which we have to play.' But one very serious obstacle to all interference with Turkistan has apparently been overlooked. Russia is not engaged *alone* in the enterprise. She has her ally of Persia, and ambassadors, too, to seek the release of the Persian slaves. Are we prepared to insist on this, and reconstruct the whole fabric of society by marching back some two or three hundred thousand slaves? If not, our proceedings are neither consonant with humanity nor the rights of nations; and if they are, the only chance of success is to leave Russia alone, or to aid her with a military force; the former the only judicious course for us to pursue. I have been thus earnest on this very momentous question from the anxiety which I feel to see our cause flourish, and our good name preserved. It is not the question of Lord or Conolly going. That is a mere trifle, which does not call for a moment's consideration. I believe the deputation of any one to Turkistan at this time to be a serious error. If it is to be, I shall, of course, do all I can by information, and by getting good people to assist the officers sent; but I hope you will excuse my beseeching you to weigh the step well before it is taken. Rely upon it, the English Cabinet can alone settle this question, and it must be at London or St. Petersburg, and not at Kokund, Bokhara, or Khiva, that we are to counteract Russia. Let us crown the passes. Let an engineer be forthwith sent to map them, and let grain (as you have just proposed) be stored behind them at Bameean. Let alarm be allayed by our not appearing to stir overmuch; for Caubul is the place for the corps d'armée, and not Bameean, which should be its outwork, and, as such, strengthened. We should have done with dealing with the Oosbeks, for it is time. In Khiva we have our agent detained. At Bokhara, poor Stoddart's captivity reflects seriously upon our character, and

1840. damages it here; while in Kokund I see no possible good likely to flow, even from the most splendid success attending the agent, and, on the contrary, much chance of evil."

May 11, 1840. Some three or four weeks after this letter was written, Macnaghten orally proposed that Burnes himself should proceed on a mission to the Russian camp. Burnes replied that he would go if he were ordered; and after the interview, having thought well over the matter, he wrote on the same evening a letter to the Envoy, saying: "With reference to our conversation this morning, when I stated my readiness to proceed to General Peroffski's camp with alacrity, if the Governor-General would but grant to me credentials and powers to act as stated in Lord Palmerston's letter—*i. e.* to tell the Russian General if he sought to subvert the political influence of the Khan of Khiva, after due reparation had been made to him, and did not withdraw his force, Great Britain would consider Russia in the light of an enemy—another view of the subject has since struck me—Will you, as the representative of the British nation, grant to me such credentials and powers? Lord Auckland requested you to communicate with the Russian General by a messenger, but the interests of the public service have pointed out to you the propriety of deviating from such instructions in so far as to send an officer instead of a messenger. With the explicit views, then, of the British Cabinet transmitted officially to you by the Governor-General, do you feel yourself authorised to draw up credentials empowering me to go as far as the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has gone? If so, I am ready, without awaiting the Governor-General's reply, to undertake the mission, as I then see in it a chance of gaining the ends of our Government without risking any little reputation I may have. If, on the other hand, you merely mean to convey to General Peroffski a hope, or request by letter, that he will not exceed the Emperor's instructions, this will be but the duty of a courier, and as my personal insight would thus fall below zero, I have no desire to undertake the journey; though even then, as I have reported to Conolly and yourself, I will proceed there, if you are of opinion it is desirable, and you think I can advance the public interests. If, however, you do not feel yourself authorised to grant to me the powers which seem

1840.

necessary, your letter of to-day to Lord Auckland may, perhaps, draw such credentials from his Lordship, and if so, I shall hold myself in readiness on their arrival here to follow Conolly to the Russian camp, taking, if possible, the Oxus as my route, by which I could reach Khiva with great expedition, and to political objects add a knowledge of that river, now so important to us."

But before there was any necessity to bring this question to the point of practical solution, intelligence was received at Caubul which consigned it to the limbo of vanities and abortions. Another mission had proceeded to the Russian camp—a mission from Heaven in the shape of that great white enemy, which was destined at a later date to put our own armies to confusion. Peroffski's legions were arrested by the destroying snow, and decimated by pestilence and famine. This source of inquietude was, therefore, removed, and Burnes was again driven back into inactivity.* The summer passed quietly over his head, but the autumn found him and all his countrymen at Caubul in a state of extreme excitement. Dost Mahomed was again in arms against the Feringhees, who had driven him from his country. He was coming down from the regions beyond the Hindoo-Koosh, raising the tribes on the way, and calling on the children of the Prophet to expel the usurping unbelievers. A British force was sent into the Kohistan, under the command of Sir Robert Sale; and Burnes went with it in chief political control of the expedition. How badly everything fared with us at the first may be gathered from the fact that the latter wrote to the Envoy, saying that there was nothing left for our troops but to fall

Dost Mahomed's last charge.

* When men—especially men of active habits—have very little to do, they are frequently disturbed by small troubles, which, at times of greater activity, would pass unnoticed. At this period Burnes was greatly irritated by some comments on Afghan affairs in the Calcutta and Agra papers. With reference to a letter in the Agra *Ukhbar*, which had reflected on some of the proceedings of Dr. Lord, Burnes wrote to his friend, saying: "I think that a simple letter under your name calling the man a cowardly slanderer and a villain, or some such choice word,

would be a good mode of rebutting him." As if truth were to be established by calling men hard names! In another letter Burnes wrote to Lord: "You have a viper in your Artillery named Kaye, who writes in the *Hurkaru*," &c. &c. The viper referred to is the writer of this book. I had, as a young man, perhaps a little too fond of my pen, emphatically protested against our entire policy in Afghanistan, and predicted its speedy collapse—which prediction, in the first flush of success, my countrymen in India, with few exceptions, were wont to deride.

1840.

back on Caubul, and there to concentrate all our strength. This was on the 2nd of November—a day of evil omen; for then Burnes's days were numbered by the days of a single year. He saw the last victorious charge of the Ameer; he saw our troops flying before him; he saw his friends and associates, Broadfoot and Lord, fall mortally wounded from their horses; and he himself narrowly escaped. This was but the darkest hour before the dawn. On the following day Dost Mahomed surrendered himself to the British Envoy, and, instead of a formidable enemy, became a harmless State prisoner. Then the spirits of Burnes and of his associates at Caubul began to rise. Writing a few weeks afterwards to one of his brothers, he said: "Caubul, November 24, 1840. I have been too much occupied these two months past to write to you, and though it has pleased Providence to crown our efforts with success, and to permit me to play a prominent part, I have yet to mourn the loss of two very dear friends, Dr. Lord and Lieutenant Broadfoot. How I escaped unscathed God only knows. I have a ball which fell at my feet, and of three political officers, I have alone lived to tell the tale. Make no parade of these facts. My interview with Dost Mahomed Khan was very interesting and very affectionate. He taunted me with nothing, said I was his best friend, and that he had come in on a letter I had written to him. This I disbelieve, for we followed him from house to house, and he was obliged to surrender. On that letter, however, I hope I shall have got for him an annual stipend of two lakhs of rupees instead of one. On our parting, I gave him an Arab horse; and what think you he gave me? His own, and only sword, and which is stained with blood. He left this for India some fourteen days ago, and is to live at Loodiana. In Kohistan I saw a failure of our artillery to breach, of our European soldiers to storm, and of our cavalry to charge; and yet God gave us the victory. And now Kurruck Singh is dead, and Now Nihal, the new ruler of the Punjab, killed while attending his father's funeral by a gate falling on him, Shere Singh reigns in his stead. Read the prediction in my *Travels*, vol. i., pp. 298-9, second edition, on this head. If we could turn over a new leaf here, we might soon make Afghanistan a barrier. You regret about my name and the Russians. Nine-tenths of what is attributed to me I

never said, but I did say the Russians were coming, and that, too, on 31st of October, 1839, and come they did; and Lord Auckland would never believe it till March, 1840! He heard from London and from Khiva of the failure simultaneously, and they wonder why we did not hear sooner. We have no mail coaches here, and hence the explanation. From Orenburg to London is eighteen days; from Bokhara to Caubul is thirty. We have no intelligence yet of a second expedition, and I hope none will come. The state of Afghanistan for the last year will show you how much reason we had to fear the Czar's approach."

1840.

After this, the horizon was clear for a little space, and there was a lull in the political atmosphere. But with the new year came new troubles. There was a crisis at Herat; and the tribes in Western Afghanistan were rising against the King and his supporters. With these things Burnes had little to do in any active capacity. He wrote letters and minutes, and gave advice, clearly seeing that everything was going wrong. "I am now a highly paid idler," he wrote to one of his brothers, "having no less than 3500 rupees a month, as Resident at Caubul, and being, as the lawyers call it, only counsel, and that, too, a dumb one—by which I mean that I give paper opinions, but do not work them out." He had, however, become more contented with his lot. He ceased to chafe at what seemed, for a time at least, to be inevitable; and enjoying, as best he could, the blessings of the present, he looked forward to a future, then apparently not very remote, when his energies might find freer scope for action, for it was believed that a higher official post would soon be found for Macnaghten. He was in excellent health at this time, and his fine animal spirits sparkled pleasantly in all his letters to his friends. On the 1st of April he wrote to Montrose, saying: "We had no sooner got Dost Mahomed Khan into our power than Herat breaks with us, and the Punjab becomes a scene of strife. Out of both contingencies we might extract good—real, solid good; we may restore the lost wings of Afghanistan, Herat, and Peshawur to Shah Soojah, and thus enable him to support himself, free us from the expense of Afghanistan, and, what would be better, withdraw our regular army within the Indus, leaving

1841.

New troubles.

1841.

Caubul as an outpost, which we could thus succour with readiness. . . . I lead, however, a very pleasant life, and if rotundity and heartiness be proofs of health, I have them. My house I taboo at all hours but breakfast, which I have long made a public meal. I have covers laid for eight, and half a dozen of the officers drop in as they feel disposed every morning, discuss a rare Scotch breakfast of smoked fish, salmon grills, devils, and jellies, puff away at their cigars till ten (the hour of assembly being nine), then I am left to myself till evening, when my friend Broadfoot (who is my assistant) and I sit down to our quiet dinner, and discuss with our Port men and manners. Once in every week I give a party of eight, and now and then I have my intimates alone, and as the good river Indus is a channel for luxuries as well as commerce, I can place before my friends at one-third in excess of the Bombay price my champagne, hock, madeira, sherry, port, claret, sauterne, not forgetting a glass of curaçoa and maraschino, and the hermetically-sealed salmon and hotch-potch (veritable hotch-potch, all the way frae Aberdeen), for deuced good it is, the peas as big as if they had been soaked for *bristling*. I see James Duke is an alderman of London; he will be Lord Mayor, and then all the smacks of Montrose will flee to London with *fine young men* for his patronage. A Duke and a Mayor! These are wonderful changes, but I am glad of it, for he is said to be a real good fellow, and deserves his prosperity. I remember he used to sit before us in the Kirk, and in his hat were written, 'Remember the eighth commandment and Golgotha,' so he will be a terror to evil-doers assuredly. Bravo, say I. I wish I were provost mysel' here; I would be as happy as the Lord Mayor."

It is not improbable that the enforced inactivity of which Alexander Burnes, at this period of his career, so often wrote, was in one sense greatly to his advantage. It often happens that men who lead very active and stirring lives fail, in the midst of their day-to-day excitements, to take that just view of surrounding circumstances which they would have taken, with more leisure on their hands and better opportunities of far-reaching observation. We cannot "see, as from a tower, the end of all," when we are wrestling with a crowd at its

1841.

base. Burnes, as a looker-on, saw clearly and distinctly what Macnaghten did not see—that we were interfering a great deal too much in Afghanistan, and that the best thing for the restored monarchy would be that we should take less trouble to support it. After an outbreak, fatally mismanaged by the Western Ghilzyes, he wrote to Major Lynch, in June, saying : “ I am not cognisant of all which you relate regarding affairs in your quarter, but I am sorry to tell you that I am one of those altogether opposed to any further fighting in this country, and that I consider we shall never settle Afghanistan at the point of the bayonet. And this opinion, which I have so long held, I am glad to see has been at length adopted in Calcutta, and will be our future guide. As regards the Ghilzyes, indeed, immense allowances ought to be made for them ; they were, till within three generations, the Kings of Afghanistan, and carried their victorious arms to the capital of Persia. It is expecting too much, therefore, to hope for their being at once peaceful subjects.” And again on the 1st of August, to another correspondent : “ Pottinger undertakes an awful risk in China. M’Neill ought not to go to Persia ; he deserves Constantinople, and I hope will get it. Lord Auckland will not pardon poor Todd, and here again I predicted failure there, and am scowled at for being a true prophet ; but certes, if Herat has gone over to Persia we are in a greater mess than ever, but I hope the return of our ambassador to Persia will set all this right. For my part, I would send no one to Persia or to Herat ; I would withdraw all but two brigades within the Indus, and these I would withdraw, one in next year, and one in the year after next, and leave the Shah to his own contingent and his Afghans, and I, as Envoy, would stake my character on this—We shall be ruined if this expense goes on.”

At last, in this autumn of 1841, news came that Sir William Macnaghten had been appointed Governor of Bombay ; but, even then, there were reports that some veteran political officer would be sent up from the Provinces to occupy his seat. It was a period of distressing doubt and anxiety to the expectant minister. In the midst of his perplexities, he was wont to seek solace in his books. His favourite author was Tacitus, in whose writings he read lessons of wisdom, which, he said,

Self-com-munings.

1841.

were of infinite service to him in the practical affairs of life. Some extracts from the journal, which he kept in this year, will show how, in the enforced inactivity of his anomalous position, he gathered knowledge from his library, which he might some day, he thought, turn to good account. At all events, such studies diverted his mind and alleviated the pains of the suspense to which he was condemned: "Caubul, August 13. Read in the thirteenth and fourteenth books of the Annals of Tacitus. What lessons of wisdom and knowledge—how the human mind and its passions are laid bare! I drink in Tacitus, and, perhaps, with the more relish, that his lessons are of practical use——" "Aug. 19. Horace Walpole's letters, how inimitable! He is only surpassed by Byron, of all letter-writers I have read; yet Walpole's details of trifles, and trifling on details, are inimitable. I have got a grand edition, and eke out the six volumes, that I may enjoy it all to my full——" "Aug. 24. Reading Sir Sidney Smith's life. It supports an opinion of mine, that all great men have more or less charlatanerie——" "Aug. 26. This is assuredly one of the idle stages in my life. I do nothing for the public, unless it be giving advice, but, as I have none to perform, unless it be to receive my 3500 rupees a month. At Bhooj, in 1829, I had similar idleness, and I improved myself. Again, in 1835, I was similarly situated, and since May, 1839, I have been so circumstanced here. I conclude that my pay is assigned to me for past conduct and duties; however, as my Lord Auckland is about to depart, I have little chance of being disturbed in my lair in his day; it may be otherwise. To study Tacitus is as pleasant as to write despatches——" "Sept. 1. An expression from Macnaghten to-day that Shah Soojah was an old woman, not fit to rule his people, with divers other condemnations. Ay, see my *Travels*, and as far back as 1831—ten years ago. Still I look upon his fitness or unfitness as very immaterial; we are here to govern for him, and must govern——" "Sept. 10. Somewhat contemplative. This is certainly an important time for me. Of supersession I have no fear, but those in power may still keep Macnaghten over me, and much as he objects to this, it enables Lord Auckland to move off, and evade his promises to me. Alas! I did not believe my first

1841.

interview with the long, tall, gaunt man on the couch at Bowood was to end thus——” “Sept. 22. The Envoy is afraid of the King’s health. A native predicts his death; he is not long-lived, I plainly see. If he dies, we were planning the *modus operandi*. I offered to go to Candahar, and bring up the new King Timour, and I predict he will make a good ruler. I question myself how far I am right in avoiding correspondence with Lord Lansdowne, Mr. Elphinstone, and all my numerous friends in England, or even with Lord Auckland; yet I believe I am acting an honest part to Macnaghten and to Government, and yet neither the one nor the other, I fear, thank me; yet it is clear that if I had carried on a hot correspondence with Lord Auckland, as he wished me, I must have injured Macnaghten, and had I, in this correspondence, evaded those points on which his Lordship was interested, I should have injured myself in his eyes, and consequently as a public servant. In after days I hope to be able to applaud my own discretion in this my difficult position; but I may fail altogether by my honesty, though I have always found it the best policy——” “Sept. 24. I have read with great relish and enjoyment the first volume of Warren Hastings’s life, and with great admiration for the man, founded on his many virtues and noble fortitude, and that, too, on the evidence of his letters, and not his biography——” “October 16. I seem hourly to lose my anxiety for power and place; yet away with such feelings, for if I be worth anything, they ought to have no hold of me. I have just read in Guizot’s *Life of Washington*: ‘In men who are worthy of the destiny (to govern), all weariness, all sadness, though it be warrantable, is weakness; their mission is toil; their reward, the success of their works;’ but still in toil I shall become weary if employed. Will they venture, after all that has been promised, and all that I have done, to pass me over? I doubt it much; if so, the past will not fix a stain on me, and the future is dark and doubtful. I have been asking myself if I am altogether so well fitted for the supreme control here as I am disposed to believe. I sometimes think not, but I have never found myself fail in power when unshackled. On one point I am, however, fully convinced, I am unfit for the second place; in it my irritation would mar all business, and in supersession

1841. there is evidently no recourse but England. I wish this doubt were solved, for anxiety is painful. One trait of my character is thorough seriousness; I am indifferent about nothing I undertake—in fact, if I undertake a thing I cannot be indifferent.”

The anniversary of his arrival in India came round. Twenty years had passed since he had first set his foot on the strand of Bombay. Seldom altogether free from superstitions and presentiments, he entered upon this 31st of October, 1841, with a vivid impression that it would bring forth something upon which his whole future life would turn. “Ay! what will this day bring forth?” he wrote in his journal, “the anniversary of my twenty years’ service in India. It will make or mar me, I suppose. Before the sun sets I shall know whether I go to Europe or succeed Macnaghten.” But the day passed, and the momentous question was not settled. Then November dawned, and neither Burnes nor Macnaghten received the desired letters from Calcutta—only vague newspaper reports, which added new fuel to the doubts and anxieties of the expectant Envoy. “I grow very tired of praise,” he wrote in his journal, “and I suppose that I shall get tired of censure in time.” This was his last entry. There was no more either of praise or of censure to agitate him in this world. Already the bitter fruit of folly and injustice had ripened upon the tree of Retribution, and the nation which had done this wrong thing was about to be judged by the “eternal law, that where crime is, sorrow shall answer it.” The Afghans are an avaricious and a revengeful people. Our only settled policy in Afghanistan was based upon the faith that by gratifying the one passion we might hold the other in control. So money was spent freely in Afghanistan. We bought safety and peace. But when it was found that this enormous expenditure was impoverishing our Indian Empire, and that the Afghans were still crying “Give—give!” we were driven upon the unpopular necessity of retrenchment, and it ceased to be worth the while of the people to tolerate our occupation of the country. First one tribe and then another rose against us; and at last the people at the capital began to bestir themselves. Already, on the 1st of November, were the streets of Caubul seething with insurrection, and the

1841.

house of Sir Alexander Burnes was in the city perilously exposed to attack. His Afghan servants told him that he was in danger, and exhorted him to withdraw to the cantonments. He said that he had done the Afghans no injury; why, then, should they injure him? He could not think that any real danger threatened him, and he retired to rest at night with little fear of the results of the morrow. Little fear, I should write, for his own personal safety; but he saw with sufficient distinctness that a great national crisis was approaching. When, on that evening, his moonshee, Mohun Lal, who had accompanied him for many years in his wanderings, warned him of the approaching danger, he rose from his chair, and made, what to his faithful assistant appeared an "astonishing speech," to the effect that the time had arrived for the English to leave the country.* But he could not be induced to adopt any precautions. He said that if he sent for a guard to protect his house, it would seem as though he were afraid.

So Alexander Burnes laid himself down to rest; and slept. But with the early morrow came the phantoms of new troubles. Plainly the storm was rising. First one, then another, with more or less authority, came to warn him that there was "death in the pot." The first, who called before daybreak, was not admitted, and Burnes slept on. But when the Afghan minister, Oosman Khan, came to the house, the servants woke their master, who rose and dressed himself,

* I give Mohun Lal's own words, which are all the more interesting for the eccentricities of the phraseology: "On the 1st of November," he wrote to Mr. Colvin, private secretary to the Governor-General, "I saw Sir Alexander Burnes, and told him that the confederacy has been grown very high, and we should fear the consequence. He stood up from his chair, sighed, and said, he knows nothing but the time has arrived that we should leave this country." In a letter to Dr. James Burnes, there is a similar statement, with the addition that, upon the same night, an Afghan chief, named Taj Mahomed, called upon Burnes, to no purpose, with a like warning: "On the 1st of November I saw him at evening, and informed him, according to the conversation of Mahomed Meerza Khan,

our great enemy, that the chiefs are contriving plans to stand against us, and therefore it will not be safe to remain without a sufficient guard in the city. He replied that if he were to ask the Envoy to send him a strong guard, it will show that he was fearing; and at the same (time) he made an astonishing speech, by saying that the time is not far when we must leave this country. Taj Mahomed, son of Gholam Mahomed Khan, the Douranee chief, came at night to him, and informed what the chiefs intended to do, but he turned him out under the pretended aspect that we do not care for such things. Our old friend, Naib Sheriff, came and asked him to allow his son, with one hundred men, to remain day and night in his place, till the Ghilzye affair is settled, but he did not agree."

1841. and went forth to receive the Wuzeer. It was no longer possible to look with incredulity upon the signs and symptoms around him. The streets were alive with insurgents. An excited crowd was gathering round his house. Still there might be time to secure safety by flight. But vainly did Oosman Khan implore Burnes to accompany him to the cantonments. He scorned to quit his post; he believed that he could quell the tumult; and so he rejected the advice that might have saved him.

That the city was in a state of insurrection was certain; but it appeared that a prompt and vigorous demonstration on the part of the British troops in cantonments might quell the tumult; so he wrote to Macnaghten for support, and to some friendly Afghan chiefs for assistance. It was then too late. Before any succour could arrive, the crowd before his house had begun to rage furiously, and it was plain that the insurgents were thirsting for the blood of the English officers. From a gallery which ran along the upper part of the house, Burnes, attended by his brother Charles, and his friend William Broadfoot, addressed himself to the excited mob. They yelled out their execration and defiance in reply, and it was plain that no expostulations or entreaties could turn them aside from their purpose. The enemy had begun to fire upon them, and, hopeless as retaliation and resistance might be, there seemed to be nothing left to the English officers but to sell their lives as dearly as they could. Broadfoot was soon shot dead. Then the insurgents set fire to Burnes's stables, rushed into his garden and summoned him to come down. All hope of succour from cantonments had now gone. Still he might purchase his own and his brother's safety by appealing to the national avarice of the Afghans. He offered them large sums of money if they would suffer him to escape. Still they called upon him to leave off firing and to come down to the garden. At last he consented, and the brothers, conducted by a Cashmeree Mussulman, who had sworn to protect them, went down to the garden; but no sooner were they in the presence of the mob than their guide cried out, "Here is Sekundur Burnes!" And straightway the insurgents fell upon them and slew them.

And so, on the 2nd of November, 1841, fell Alexander

1841.

Burnes, butchered by an Afghan mob. He was only thirty-six years of age. That he was a remarkable man, and had done remarkable things, is not to be doubted. He was sustained, from first to last, by that great enthusiasm, of which Sir John Malcolm has spoken, as the best security for a successful Indian career. He was of an eager, impulsive, romantic temperament; but he had a sufficiency of good strong practical sense to keep him from running into any dangerous excesses. He had courage of a high order; sagacity, penetration, and remarkable quickness of observation. It has been said of him that he was unstable, that his opinions were continually shifting, and that what he said on one day he often contradicted on the next. The fact is, that he was singularly unreserved and outspoken, and was wont to set down in his correspondence with his familiar friends all the fleeting impressions of an active and imaginative mind. But on great questions of Central-Asian policy he was not inconsistent. The confusion was in the minds of others, not in his own mind. He had strong opinions, which he never ceased to express, so long as it was possible to give them practical effect; but, overruled by higher authority, and another course of policy substituted for that which he would have pursued, he consented to act, in a ministerial or executive capacity, for the furtherance of the great object of national safety which he believed might have been better attained in another way. When he found that his views were not the views of the Government which he served, he offered to withdraw from the scene in favour of some more appreciative agent; but he was told that his services were needed, so he consented to work against the grain.* I have already expressed my belief

* Burnes often stated this very distinctly in his correspondence, and was very anxious that it should be clearly known and remembered. I give the following, from a letter written at the end of 1839, because it is one of his most emphatic utterances on the subject, and contains also a passage on his increased sense of responsibility, written in a more solemn strain than the general bulk of his correspondence: "All my implorations to Government to act with promptitude and decision had reference to doing something when Dost Mahomed

was King, and all this they have made to appear in support of Shah Soojah being set up! But again, I did advocate the setting up of Shah Soojah, and lent all my aid, name, and knowledge to do it. But when was this? When my advice had been rejected, and the Government were fairly stranded. I first gave opinions, and then asked leave to withdraw; but Lord Auckland proved to me that it would be desertion at a critical moment, and I saw so myself; but I entered upon the support of his policy not as what was best, but what was

1841. that in so doing he did what was right. Doubtless, he had his failings, as all men have. But he died young. And I am inclined to think that, if his life had been spared, he would have attained to much higher distinction; for all that he lacked to qualify him for offices of large responsibility was a greater soberness of judgment, which years would almost certainly have brought. As it was, few men have achieved, at so early an age, so much distinction, by the force of their own personal character, as was achieved by Alexander Burnes.

best under the circumstances which a series of blunders had produced. To have acted otherwise must have been to make myself superior to the Governor-General, and I saw that I had a duty to my country, ill as the representatives of that country in India had behaved to me, and I bore and forbore in consequence. My life has been devoted to my country; like creeping things, I may have in the outset looked only to personal advantages, but persons have

long since given place to things; I now feel myself, at the age of thirty-five, with an onerous load upon me—the holy and sacred interests of nations; and much as men may envy me, I begin sometimes to tremble at the giddy eminence I have already attained. In some respects it is indeed not to be envied, and I only hope that no passion may turn me from the path I tread, and that I may feel the awful responsibility which I have brought upon myself.”

CAPTAIN ARTHUR CONOLLY.

[BORN 1807.—DIED 1842.]

IF the reader, who has followed me through the preceding chapters, remembering what I have written about the characters and the careers of Alexander Burnes and Henry Martyn, can conceive the idea of a man combining in his own person all that was excellent and loveable in both, and devoting his life to the pursuit of the objects which each in his turn sought to attain, the image of Arthur Conolly will stand in full perfection before him. For in him the high courage and perseverance of the explorer were elevated and sublimed by the holy zeal and enthusiasm of the apostle. Ready to dare everything and to suffer everything in a good cause; full of faith, and love, and boundless charity, he strove without ceasing for the glory of God and for the good of his fellow-men; and in little things and in great, in the daily interests of a gentle life, in which the human affections were never dormant, and in the stern necessities of public service, which for the honour of the nation, for the good of the human race, and for the glory of the religion which he professed and acted, demanded from him the surrender even of that life itself, manifested all the noblest self-abnegation of the Hero and the Martyr.

1807.

Arthur Conolly was the third of the six sons of a gentleman, who, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, went out to India, made a rapid fortune, and returned to spend it in ease and comfort at home. He was born in Portland-place, London, in the year 1807; and received his education at Rugby. He was not much happier there than was Henry Martyn at the Truro Grammar School. Shy and sensitive, and of a nature too refined to cope successfully with the rough realities of

1822—23. public school life, he was not happy there ; and he often spoke in after-life of the sufferings he endured at “Mother Bucknell’s.” In good time, however, deliverance came.* He was removed from Rugby in 1822, and sent to the Military Seminary of the East India Company. His father had large “interest at the India House,” especially with the Marjoribanks family ; so in due course, one after the other, he sent all his boys to India.

Arthur, in the first instance, was designed for one of the scientific branches of the Indian Army, and was sent, therefore, to the Company’s Military Seminary. But whilst at Addiscombe,† an offer having been made to him of a commission in the Bengal Cavalry, he accepted it, or it was accepted for him. He left the military seminary on the 7th of May, 1823, and on the 16th of June he quitted England in a vessel bound for Calcutta. There was so much of incident crowded into the latter years of his life, that it is necessary to pass briefly over the chapter of his boyish years.

The ship in which he sailed for India was the Company’s ship *Grenville*, which carried Reginald Heber, then newly

* That all this made a strong impression on his mind—an impression which was never effaced—may be gathered from a passage in a letter which he wrote to one of his brothers in 1840, with reference to the education of a son : “I don’t feel anxious to hear,” wrote Arthur, “that he has been sent to England for his education ; for, judging by the majority of young men who are driven through our schools and colleges from their earliest youth upwards, the system of turning boys out from the affectionately constraining influences of their own homes, as soon as they can run, does not produce the most desirable fruits. . . . Under his first instructors, a boy works rather from fear than from esteem, and is prevented from thinking for himself, whilst the religion which should be his mainspring is performed before him as a task for mornings and evenings and twice o’ Sundays. Societies of little boys certainly teach each other the meannesses which they would learn at home, and as for the knowledge of the world, on which so much stress is laid, it is commonly got by young men through channels which greatly diminish the value of the

acquisition. These opinions would make me retain a son as long as possible under what Scripture beautifully terms ‘the commandment of his father and the law of his mother,’ even if his home were in England, that he might be kept unspotted from the world, which is the great thing for the happiness of this life as well as for the next.” And he added : “I hope he is learning to read and write Hindustani, if not Persian. He will find such knowledge of immense advantage to him, if he ever comes out here ; and if he does not, an induction into Oriental idioms will enrich his mother tongue.”

† As this is the first mention, in the pages of this work, of the old Military Seminary, near Croydon, which was once the nursery of so many heroes, I should not have passed over it without notice, if I had not thought that it would receive fitter illustration in the Memoir which next follows. Arthur Conolly can hardly be regarded as an “Addiscombe man,” as he never completed the course of education, but went out to India with what was called a “direct appointment.”

consecrated Bishop of Calcutta, to his diocese. In those days, the first voyage to India of a young writer or a young cadet often exercised an important influence over his whole after-career. Life-long friendships were often made or abiding impressions fixed upon the mind by the opportunities of a life on board ship. It was no small thing for a youth of sixteen, ardent, imaginative, with a vast capacity for good in his nature, to sit daily at the feet of such a man as Bishop Heber. The Bishop has recorded, in one of his letters, the fact that when he was studying the Persian and Hindostanee languages, "two of the young men on board showed themselves glad to read with him." Arthur Conolly was one of the two. But he derived better help than this from his distinguished fellow-passenger. The seed of the Word, which then came from the Sower's hand, fell upon good ground and fructified a hundred-fold. In a letter to a friend, Heber wrote, some five weeks after the departure of the *Grenville*: "Here I have an attentive audience. The exhibition is impressive and interesting, and the opportunities of doing good considerable." Among his most attentive hearers was young Arthur Conolly, who took to his heart the great truths which were offered to him, and became from that time rooted and grounded in the saving faith.

1824—27.

The first years of his residence in India did not differ greatly from those of the generality of young military officers, who have their profession to learn in the first instance, and in the next to qualify themselves for independent employment. He was attached, as a cornet, to the 6th Regiment of Bengal Cavalry, and in 1824 and the two following years was stationed first at Keitah, and then at Lohargong. In 1825 he obtained his lieutenancy; and in 1827 he fell sick, and was compelled to obtain a furlough to England on medical certificate.

After a year and a half spent in Europe, he was sufficiently recruited to think of returning to India. In those days, it was the ordinary course for an officer, "permitted to return to his duty," to take a passage in a sailing vessel, steering round the Cape of Good Hope. What is now called somewhat inappropriately the Overland Route, was not then open for passenger-

Overland to
India.
1829.

1829—30. traffic; and if it had been, it would not have held out much attraction to Arthur Conolly. He desired to return to India really by the Overland Route—that is, by the route of Russia and Persia; and, as he has himself declared, “the journey was undertaken upon a few days’ resolve.” “Quitting London,” he has recorded in the published account of his travels, “on the 10th of August, 1829, I travelled through France and the North of Germany to Hamburg, and embarking on board a steam-vessel at Travemunden on the 1st of September, sailed up the Baltic and the Gulf of Finland in four days to St. Petersburg.” Such is the first sentence of the two volumes of travels which Arthur Conolly has given to the world. From St. Petersburg he travelled to Moscow, and thence onwards to Tiflis, whence he journeyed forward across the Persian frontier and halted at Tabreez.

It was his original intention, after having reached that place, to strike down thence to the shores of the Persian Gulf, and there to take ship for Bombay. But the spirit of adventure within him grew stronger as he proceeded on his journey, and he determined to explore at least some portions of Central Asia. There was little known, in those days, about Afghanistan. He might do good service by acquiring information respecting the countries lying between Persia and India, and it suited his humour at that time to make the effort. It was the enterprise of the Englishman more than anything else which carried him forward in those early days. He was very young when he started on his journey. He had numbered only twenty-two years; but he had courage and self-reliance of the highest order; and ever as he went, the desire to see more impelled him forward to new fields of adventure. Perhaps there was even then obscurely taking shape within him some previsions of the “great game in Central Asia,” which he afterwards believed it was the especial privilege of Great Britain to play.

The winter was spent pleasantly at Tabreez, where the British Mission, of which Sir John Macdonald was then the chief, was located; and in the early spring of 1830, having received good encouragement and offers of valuable assistance from the minister, he made his preparations for a march to Teheran, from which place he purposed to attempt a journey,

1830.

either by way of Khiva, Bokhara, and Caubul, or through Khorassan and Afghanistan, to the Indus. "I had the good fortune," he said, "to engage as my companion Syud Keramut Ali, an unprejudiced, very clever, and gentlemanly native of Hindostan, who had resided many years in Persia, and was held in great esteem by the English there. I had afterwards much reason to congratulate myself upon having so agreeable a companion, and it was chiefly owing to his assistance that I safely completed my journey."

Starting from Teheran on the 6th of April, the travellers made their way through Mazenderan to Astrabad, which they reached before the end of the month. There Conolly determined to attempt the route to Khiva. "Thinking it necessary," he said, "to have a pretence for our journey, I assumed the character of a merchant; the Syud was to call himself my partner, and we purchased for the Khiva markets red silk scarfs, Kerman shawls, furs, and some huge bags of pepper, ginger, and other spices." This he afterwards confessed was a mistake, for as he did not play the part of a merchant adroitly, the disguise caused suspicion to alight upon him. What befel the travellers among the Toorkomans, Conolly has himself narrated in the first volume of his published narrative—how they crossed the Goorgaon and the Attruck rivers, and rode into the desert with their pretended merchandise on camel-back; how they fell into the hands of thieves, who, under pretence of protecting them, robbed them of all that they had got; how they narrowly escaped being murdered, or sold into hopeless captivity; and how at last they obtained deliverance by the opportune arrival of a party of Persian merchants, with whom they returned in safety to Asterabad. He went back *re infectâ*, but he had spent nearly a month among the Toorkomans, and had penetrated nearly half way to Khiva, and seen more of the country than any European had seen before, or—with one exception, I believe—has ever visited since.

After a brief sojourn at Asterabad, Arthur Conolly, attended by Keramut Ali, travelled to Meshed, by the way of Subzawur and Nisharpoor. At the holy city he was detained, money-bound, until the middle of September, when he started, in the trail of an Afghan army under the com-

Adventures in
the Desert.Meshed and
Herat.

1830.

mand of Yar Mahomed, for Herat, the Afghan city which afterwards became so celebrated in Eastern history. Upon all with whom he was associated there the young English officer made a most favourable impression. Another young English officer—Eldred Pottinger—who visited the city some years afterwards, found that Arthur Conolly's name was great in Herat, and that many held him in affectionate remembrance. "I fell in," says the former in his journal, referring to the year 1838, "with a number of Captain Conolly's acquaintances. Every person asked after him, and appeared disappointed when I told them I did not know him. In two places, I crossed Mr. Conolly's route, and on his account received the greatest hospitality and attention—indeed, more than was pleasant, for such liberality required corresponding liberality upon my part, and my funds were not well adapted for any extraordinary demand upon them. In Herat, Mr. Conolly's fame was great. In a large party where the subject of the Europeans who had visited Herat was mooted, Conolly's name being mentioned, I was asked if I knew him, and on replying, 'Merely by report,' Moollah Mahomed, a Sheeah Moollah of great eminence, calling to me across the room, said, 'You have a great pleasure awaiting you. When you see him, give him my salutation, and tell him that I say he has done as much to give the English nation fame in Herat as your ambassador, Mr. Elphinstone, at Peshawur,' and in this he was seconded by the great mass present."

This was truly a great distinction for one so young; and it was earned, not at all as some later travellers in Mahomedan countries have earned distinction, by assuming disguises and outwardly apostatising, but by the frankest possible assertion of the character of a Christian gentleman. Moreover, he appeared before the Heratees as a very poor one. He did not go among the Afghans as Elphinstone had gone among them, laden with gifts; but as one utterly destitute, seeking occasional small loans to help him on his way. Yet even, in these most disadvantageous circumstances, the nobility of his nature spoke out most plainly; and the very Moollahs, with whom he contended on behalf of his religion, were fain to help him as though he had been one of their sect. He had many warm

disputations with these people, and they seem to have honoured him all the more for bravely championing his faith. Young as he was, he felt that our national character had suffered grievously in the eyes of the people of the East by our neglect of the observances of our religion. "I am sure," he said, "the bulk of the Mahomedans in this country do not believe that the Feringhees have any real religion. They hear from their friends, who visit India, that we eat abominations, and are never seen to pray; and they care not to inquire more about us. . . . It is, therefore, greatly to be desired that such translations of our Scriptures as may invite their study should be sent among these people, in order first to satisfy them that we have a religion, and secondly that they may know what our religion is; in order that they may learn to respect us, which they do not now, and gradually to regard us with kindlier feelings; for until they do, we shall in vain attempt to propagate the Gospel among them;" and then he proceeded to discourse very shrewdly and intelligently on some of the principal errors which had been committed by our people in their efforts to propagate the Christian faith—errors principally arising from our ignorance or disregard of the national characters of those whom we had endeavoured to instruct in the truths of the Gospel.

From Herat, Arthur Conolly proceeded, by the route of Ghirisk, to Candahar; and thence by the valley of Pisheen, in which he halted for some time, to Quettah, and through the Bolan Pass to the country of the Ameers of Sindh. He then journeyed to Bahwulpore and across the great Indian desert, to the British frontier, which he crossed in the month of January, 1831. At Delhi he met the Governor-General, Lord William Bentinck, to whom he gave an account of his wanderings, and afterwards dropped down to Calcutta by the river route. At the Presidency he drew up an interesting paper on the subject of the "Overland Invasion of India," which he printed in one of the Calcutta journals, and afterwards appended to his published travels. In those days, a paper on such a subject showing any real knowledge of the countries traversed was a novelty; but it was reserved for a later generation to discern the large amount of sagacity that informed it.

Return to
India.

1831—33.

During the greater part of this year Conolly was employed in arranging the information which he had collected in the course of his travels—work in which he was assisted by Mr. Charles Trevelyan, then a young civilian of high promise, who drew up some joint reports with him, which appear to have been prepared partly at Delhi and partly at Meerut, from which latter place the young cavalry officer went to Kurnaul. Even at that time it was plain that nothing had made so strong an impression on the traveller's mind as the knowledge which he had obtained of the abominable man-stealing, slave-dealing practices of the Toorkoman tribes, and the misery which this vile trade inflicted upon the people of Central Asia. He saw, too, under what strong provocation Russia was labouring, and how impossible it was, with any show of reason and justice, to deny her right to push forward to the rescue of her enslaved people, and the chastisement of the States which had swept them off and sold them into slavery. "The case of these people," he said, "is deplorable, and in the midst of that laudable sympathy which has been excited in this country for the condition of slaves in general, it cannot be doubted that the wretched captives who languish in the steppes of Tartary will have their share, although their situation be unhappily beyond the hope of relief; and however important it may be to check the dangerous ambition of a too aspiring nation, humanity will be inclined to wish success to the Russian cause, were it but to put a period to a system so replete with barbarity as the trade in captives at Khiva." He was far in advance of his age when he wrote in this strain; for it was not the fashion in those days, or indeed for more than a quarter of a century afterwards, to look upon Russia as any other than an unscrupulous aggressor, driven onward by lust of conquest, and eager to contend with England for the mastery of Hindostan.

Conolly and
Wolff.

But the ardent philanthropist was only a regimental subaltern. It was soon time for Lieutenant Conolly to return to his military duties, so he rejoined his regiment; and, after a while, at Cawnpore, made the acquaintance of the famous missionary traveller, Joseph Wolff. "They took sweet counsel together, and they walked in the House of the Lord as friends." With what deep emotion has Wolff recorded his

1833.

recollections of that meeting! "From Delhi," he says, "I passed to Agra, and thence to various places until I reached Cawnpore. HERE I MET WITH LIEUTENANT CONOLLY." The words are printed in Wolff's book in capital letters, as I have printed them here. "When I travelled first in Khorassaun, in the year 1831," he continues, "I heard at Meshed by the Jews, that an English traveller had preceded me there, by the name of Arthur Conolly. They described him as a man who lived in the fear of God and of religion. The moment I arrived he took me to his house, and not only showed me the greatest hospitality, but, as I was at that time short of money, he gave me every assistance in his power—and not only so—he revised my journal for me with the most unaffected kindness. He also collected the Mahomedan [Moollahs to his house, and permitted me not only to discuss with them the subject of religion, but gave me most substantial aid in combating their arguments. Conolly was a man possessed of a deep scriptural knowledge; a capital textuary. Various enemies are always found to attack the lone missionary. Nobly and well did this gallant soldier acquit himself in the church militant, both in deeds of arms and deep devotion to the cause of Christ."* What Arthur Conolly on his part

* A friend who was then at Cawnpore, writing to me of this period of Conolly's history, says: "... An acquaintance, which ripened into mutual regard and esteem, began in an odd way, and was improved by an odd man. I was very much charmed with his singing, and he was taken with my playing, on which he made the discovery that he had never been taught, and I had never learnt notes; and while I was indebted to an enthusiastic bellows-blower in Chichester Cathedral, who, for sixpence a week, allowed me to operate on the old organ therein, and used to predict no end of future fame, he, too, had been encouraged by some old nurse to believe that he was a cherub, and would beat Braham yet. The odd man was Joseph Wolff. . . . When Wolff paid Conolly a visit at Cawnpore, I was a good deal with them, and joined in their laughter. Yes, there was a good deal of laughing. Wolff was both untidy and uncleanly, and yet not unwilling to be reformed, and so, at or before break-

fast, ran the lesson. From Arthur Conolly to him: 'Peer Moorshid, have we put on the clean stockings?' Then next, 'Have we used the sponge and chillumchee?' (basin.) To all of which Wolff would make good-humoured reply, adding, 'Truly ye are all sons of Eezak!' Yet there was real love in that laughing. Wolff's love and admiration of Arthur Conolly were unbounded. He could, too, break out into lofty discourse, and Arthur Conolly held his own with him. I never can forget one Sabbath conversation on the Jews, protracted till it was time for us all to go to church together, when Wolff preached on the subject—The Jews, think how great were their privileges; Christian Englishmen, think how great are your privileges. When Wolff, in after years, went to Bokhara, and spoke of Arthur Conolly as his 'moreed'—as I confidently recollect he did, though I cannot lay hold of the narrative—I feel assured his mind often went back to those days at Cawnpore."

1833.

thought of his friend may be gathered from a letter written by him shortly after his departure from Cawnpore. "Wolff has left us," wrote the young Christian enthusiast on the 19th of February, 1833, "and has taken with him the esteem and best wishes of all who knew him. As you will shortly see him in Calcutta, I need not enter into much detail of his sayings and doings here, but let me again assure you that he is neither crazy, vain, nor fanatical, but a simple-minded, humble, rational, and sound Christian. His chief desire is to preach to all people, Jesus Christ *crucified*, the God, and only Saviour of mankind: he is naturally most anxious that his own brethren should turn to the light that has shone upon him, and therefore he seeks them in all parts of the earth where God's wrath has scattered them, but ever as he goes, he proclaims to the Mahomedan, and to the idolator, the great object of his mission. On his opinions concerning the personal reign of our Saviour on earth during the Millennium, I am not qualified to pass judgment, but I believe he has chiefly formed them upon a *literal* interpretation of the yet to be fulfilled prophecies, especially those contained in the 72nd Psalm and the 60th Isaiah. . . . And after all, though he is most decided in his creed, he says: 'I am no inspired prophet, and I may err in my calculations and conclusions, but the book from which I deduce them cannot be wrong—search into its meanings, as you are commanded, with prayer and humble diligence, and then decide according to the understanding that God has given you; I ask not that you should accept my words, but that you should inquire diligently into those which contain the assurance of a blessing to those who read and keep them,' Rev. i. 3. If this be madness, I wish he would bite me. In his English discourses, Wolff labours under ignorance of idioms and select expressions, and finds difficulty in well embodying and connecting the thoughts that crowd upon him, yet it is always a pleasure to hear him, for often when struggling with the words of a big sentence, he throws out a few thrillingly beautiful expressions that give light to the rest, and at times it is quite wonderful how he rises with the grandeur of his theme, and finds an uninterrupted flow of fine language. He was very clear and forcible in his exposition of the 51st Psalm, and the 9th of Acts, and the Sunday

1833.

morning before he left us, he preached a homily upon Paul's address to King Agrippa, which we all felt to be sublimely beautiful throughout. . . . Judging by the benefit we have reaped from his conversation here, we may hope that he will be made the means of doing much good wherever he goes. You will be delighted with his company in private society, for he is full of varied and most interesting anecdote; but, above all, I hope you will hear him when he appears to the greatest advantage in the pulpit, for understanding the Hebrew meanings of words in Scripture, he throws new light upon passages that are familiar to us, but chiefly he preaches truth *from* the heart, and therefore, generally, *to* the heart."

At Cawnpore, Arthur Conolly corresponded with Alexander Burnes, who had accomplished his great journey, and was then reaping his reward. Conolly had been the first to acquire and to place on record the much-needed information relating to the country between India and Persia; but he had been slow to make his appearance before the English public, and the Bombay officer had been rising into eminence, whilst his comrade of Bengal was still almost unknown. Conolly rejoiced in the success of his brother-traveller, and, without the slightest tinge of jealousy upon his feelings, wrote to congratulate Burnes on his achievements. "Although," he wrote on the 20th of April, 1833, "I may be one of the last to congratulate you upon the happy accomplishment of your journey, I beg you not to rank me amongst the least sincere, for I really compliment you upon the resolution which has carried you through the most difficult as well as the most interesting part of Central Asia, and trust that you will derive as much honour and benefit from your travels, as we doubtless shall instruction and amusement. I meant to write to you at Bombay, but hearing that you were coming round to Calcutta, I determined there to address my congratulations, and some remarks upon certain matters in which you are interested. First, I owe you an explanation of a circumstance which, if I did not describe it, might possibly induce you to entertain what was, I believe, the Governor-General's opinion—that I wished feloniously to appropriate your valuable survey of the Indus. When in Calcutta, I drew up for his Lordship a map of the countries lying between the Arras and Indus, the Aral

Conolly and
Burnes.

1833.

and Indian ocean, which, being compiled at the Surveyor-General's office from the best authorities, contained the Indus as laid down by you. In this I sketched my route from Meshed to Buhawalpore, correcting the error that appeared in my protraction by the *Bukkur* of your map. When I had written out my journal for the press, I wrote to head-quarters to know whether I might send a copy of the above-mentioned map to England to be published with my book, and I especially begged to know whether there existed objections to my using that portion of it which had been copied from your survey. I addressed myself to my relation, Mr. Macnaghten, the secretary, and our mutual friend Trevelyan answered for him, in the note which I am sure he will not object to my enclosing. In consequence of its contents, I sent home to the Geographical Society, in London, as much of the map as embraced my route, copying into it from your survey a *bit* of the river about *Bukkur*, so as to place that point correctly, and mentioning that I had so done; there anticipating that a full and correct copy would be furnished me for my book. I wrote a preface to the last, in which I offered you my poor thanks for the benefit I thought to borrow from your labours. Objections were made at the Surveyor-General's office to completing the map without specific instructions from head-quarters. I wrote for these, and the Governor-General being up the country, I was occupied in alternate correspondence with his Lordship's and the Vice-Resident's secretaries for about two months, at the end of which time it was notified to me that I might use every part of the map in question except that part which had been laid down by you. I had then only to regret that I had lost so much time in consequence of his Lordship's opinion not having been correctly ascertained in the first instance, and to cancel that part of my preface which made mention of you. In this particular instance I could not see much danger of acting wrong, as I was informed that *Government* would very shortly publish a map containing *all* the latest information; but I would in no case have borrowed information from you, had I thought that you would object to my doing so with due acknowledgment of my obligations. I do not now apprehend that you will hold me guilty of any evil intention, but it is proper that I should explain the cir-

cumstance, and beg your excuse for any error with which you may deem me chargeable. . . . I have before me your long and kind letter, dated on the Ravee, January 26, 1832, since when you have made a grand tour. You were right in supposing that I would willingly have undertaken such a trip with you, but, as you so well foresaw, there were several objections to my doing so. The notes, for which you so politely thanked me, were, I fear, too slight to have served you much, but they were heartily at your service, as are all those which I have collected for publication. Permit me to offer you these, with the sketch of my route, and the slightly altered country through which it runs. The map which contains it, you will get at the Surveyor-General's office, and my relation, Mr. Macnaghten, now Political Secretary, will procure for you a copy of the roughly-printed pages which I sent home for Mr. Murray to publish. From them you may glean a few particulars which will enable you to prove, or to complete, some of your notes, and I beg that you will make the freest use of all. 'Tis late to thank you for the good wishes and kind encouragement contained in your precedingly-mentioned letter, but you have not been travelling upon post roads, and must, therefore, accept my present acknowledgments. Several untoward circumstances have conspired to keep me without the pale of the Sirkar's patronage, and my wisest plan, I believe, would be to fold up my carpet of hope, and betake myself to a quiet whiff at the pipe of resignation, but I am at heart too much of a vagabond to do this, and trust yet to pitch a tent among some of our long-bearded friends of the mountains."

But these anticipations of continued neglect were soon falsified. In 1834, Lieutenant Conolly went with his regiment to Mhow, and soon afterwards he was transferred to that great outlet for the energies of aspiring young soldiers, kept down by the seniority system—the Political Department. He was appointed an assistant to the Governor-General's agent in Rajpootana. He was consoled at the same time by receipt of intelligence from England assuring him that his book had been published, and had been well received by the critics and by the public. Burnes sent him some cuttings from the literary journals to show how well his fellow-traveller had been reviewed—an attention which Conolly gratefully

1833—34.

1834.
Political
employment.

1834.

acknowledged in a letter, which is interesting on many other accounts. Writing from the Sambhur Lake, May 30, 1835, he said : “ Pray accept my sincere thanks for your welcome letter of the 11th instant, containing Monsieur D’Avega’s secret and confidential notice of the honours designed for us by the Geographical Society of Paris. I must endeavour, in my letter of thanks to this liberal and enlightened body, to atone for not having at first presented a copy of my book to them. It was very kind of you to do this for me, according to the hint by which I could not otherwise have profited, and I have to thank you for this friendly act as one of a series for which I am your debtor. I did not answer your London letters, because you talked of returning to the East immediately ; but you may be sure that I was much gratified by the periodical notices of my work, which you were so good as to send me. They came like rays of sunshine after a cloud ! There could be little doubt of your success ; but as it has been hardly equalled, I may offer you my congratulations upon it. I think you did right in declining the Secretaryship to his Majesty’s Embassy in Irân, because Mr. Elphinstone advised you, and I hope that he saw a better field for you in Caubul or Bokhara. The attention of the home authorities has, after a long dream, been awakened to the state of their politics in Persia, and the appointment of Lord Heytesbury to the Governor-Generalship induces me to believe that British interests will no longer be neglected in Central Asia. Your fortune, of course, is not dependent upon the retention or abolition of what is termed the non-interference system with regard to our foreign affairs ; you may speedily rise here to a higher station than the one above mentioned, but, for my own part, I would rather be Secretary of Embassy in Persia than the greatest magnate in any part of this *consuming* clime. It does, indeed, try both body and mind. I speak feelingly on this subject just now, for I am living in a tent on the border of the famed Salt Lake of Sambhur, ceded to us after the Joudpore war, in order that Lord William might be styled ‘ the fountain of grace and bounty.’ As assistant to the Governor-General’s agent in Rajpootana, I am residing here in the joint capacities of Hakim and Bunneeah, and as everything is yet in confusion and ruin, I am as hardly worked and as badly fed as Sancho

was in Barrataria. The last advices from Loodianah state that Runjeet was about to close with the Afghans. I fear that he will get the better of them somehow or other. Shah Soojah is in the Sikh camp. I hear the Maharajah has promised to make him King of Peshawur. Thus far may the troops of the Royal Cyclops advance their standards, but they will not be able to hold ground farther West: so thinks my esteemed friend Syud Keramut Ali, who has lately returned from Caubul, and who gives me very interesting accounts of the state in which he left the Caubul Sirdars. The Syud advised Jubbar Khan to send his eldest son to India for an English education. Captain Wade discovered a political mystery lying deep under this specious pretext, and after some quarrels which occurred in consequence, my friend, as the weakest party, went to the wall. I hope, however, to be able to show that all the differences had rise in mistakes. He at present stands condemned upon an *ipse dixit*, according to the equitable system by which whites judge blacks. I have requested my Calcutta agent to send you a copy of my book—a compliment which I could not sooner pay, and which I hope you will accept as a mark of my high esteem.” 1835—38.

In the performance of his political and other duties, Arthur Conolly worked on, until, in the month of January, 1838, he obtained a furlough to England. He did not go home because he was sick, or because he was weary of Indian life, but because he was drawn thither by the attractions of one to whom he had given the best affections of his heart. He had ever, in words which I find in one of his own letters, with reference to the character of a friend, a great *besoin d'aimer*—and he had found one worthy to fill the void. He had met in India a young lady, the daughter of a man in high position there, a member of a noble family; and he had given to her all the love of his warm, passionate nature. But she had returned to England with her parents; and so he followed thither, believing, as he had good reason to believe, that their reunion would soon be followed by their marriage. In England.

They met again, under her father's roof; and for a while he was supremely happy. But the fond hopes which he had cherished were doomed to bitter disappointment. The blight which fell upon the life of Henry Martyn fell also upon the Disappoint-ment.

1838.

life of Arthur Conolly. The whole history of it lies before me as written by himself, but it is not a history to be publicly related. There was no fault upon either side. Nothing more is to be said of it than that it was God's will. And no man ever bowed himself more resignedly or reverentially to such a dispensation. He had been resolved for her sake to sacrifice his career; never to return to India, but to go into a house of business—to accept any honourable employment, so that he might not take her from her family and her home. But when this hope was unexpectedly prostrated, he turned again to the career which lay before him, and went back into the solitude of public life. He went back, chastened and subdued, full of the deepest love for the one, and of boundless charity for the many; not at all exasperated, not at all embittered, but with a softer and more loving heart than before; with an enlarged desire to benefit the human race, and a stronger faith in the boundless mercy of God. The refined tenderness and delicacy of his nature could be fittingly expressed only by the use of his own words. I know nothing more beautiful—nothing more touching—than his letters on this subject. The entire unselfishness of his nature was manifest in every word that he spoke, up to the time when, the betrothal ended, he said to her whom he had lost, that, although there was cause for sorrow on both sides, there was none for reproach on either; that, with God's comfort, he should not fail to find happiness in single life, especially if he could feel assured of God's restoring hers; and conjured her to look up and be herself again, for the sake of all those who must grieve if she did not, and ever to feel that she had his full and undying esteem, his unpresuming friendship, and his unceasing prayers. It was all over. Thenceforth Humanity became his bride, “and airy hopes his children.”

New aspirations.

Happily for him, there was something in the great world of becoming magnitude to fire his imagination, to absorb his thoughts, and to invite him to energetic action. The contemplated invasion of Afghanistan was at this time occupying the minds of those members of the Cabinet whose duty it was to shape our policy in Asia, as seen both from our Western and our Eastern dominions. The information of any intelligent Englishman who had actually visited the countries, or any part

1838.

of the countries, which were about to become the scene of our operations, was, therefore, eagerly sought. Alexander Burnes had returned to India, leaving behind him, however, some rich Oriental legacies; and it was no small thing in such a conjuncture for a Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, or a President of the India Board, whose experiences did not lie much in that direction, to be able to converse with a British officer who had visited Herat—the famous frontier city to which the Persians were laying siege. Whether Arthur Conolly were altogether the kind of man best suited to their purpose may admit, perhaps, of a doubt. They may have thought him a little over-enthusiastic—a little too wild and visionary. But sober-minded practical men were not very likely, in those days, to make such hazardous journeys as Arthur Conolly had made. The man who did these things had necessarily a dash of romance in his nature, and you might be sure that he would not expound his views in a very cold-blooded manner. One thing, however, must have satisfied them. He was delighted with the idea of an advance into Afghanistan. Seeing, as he did, in the distance, such grand results to be attained by British intervention, he did not scan very narrowly the means to be immediately employed. His view of the matter was rather that of a grand Anti-slavery Crusade than of a political movement, intended to check-mate the designs of another great European power. He grasped, in very singleness of heart, the idea of a band of Christian heroes entering the remote regions of Central Asia as Champions of Humanity and Pioneers of Civilisation. Full of this thought, he drew up a memorandum for the Home Government, in which he expounded his views, saying: “Now both the Russians and Persians have the most legitimate plea for invading Toorkistan, especially Kharasm, where numbers of their countrymen are held in abject slavery—a plea last to be disallowed by England! How, then, can we frustrate the designs of ambition which our rival will so speciously cover? Possibly, by persuading the Oosbegs themselves to do away with the grievance which gives the Russians and Persians a pretext for invading them. Let the British Government send a properly accredited Envoy to Khiva, in the first place, and thence, if advisable, across the Oxus, at once to explain our

1838.

present acts in Afghanistan, and to try this only open way of checking a Russian approach, which will entail far greater trouble upon us. Since the last Russian Embassy to Bokhara, the ruler of that kingdom has actually exerted himself to suppress the sale of Russians in his territory, and nearly all the Muscovite people who remain enslaved in Toorkistan are now in Kharasm. Nothing but fear can have induced the Ameer of Bokhara to heed the Czar's remonstrances, and arguments which have proved so effectual with him should not fail with the Khan of Khiva, in the event of the latter chief's being brought to see the danger of Russo-Persian invasion nearer and greater than he has been accustomed to consider it. . . . The King of Bokhara would seem prepared to meet us half way in our commercial advances. When Sir A. Burnes was at his capital, 'the Vizier,' writes that officer, 'conversed at great length on subjects of commerce relating to Bokhara and Britain, and expressed much anxiety to increase the communication between the countries, requesting that I myself would return *as a trading* ambassador to Bokhara.' A similar desire for an improved trade with us was repeated to Mr. Wolff, the missionary, when he visited Bokhara. The advantages of the commerce which his neighbour encourages cannot be unknown to the Khivan Khan, and few representations should be needed to convince the latter chief that he might make his desert capital a still greater trade mart than Bokhara, through the facility that the river Oxus offers him."

To remove the not unreasonable pretext for Russian advances in Central Asia, Arthur Conolly proposed that the British authorities should negotiate with the principal Oosbeg chiefs, and represent to them that if they would undertake to restrain the Turcoman tribes from carrying off into slavery the subjects of Russia and Persia, the British would use their influence with the Governments of those countries to persuade them to fix their boundaries at limits which would inspire our Government with confidence, and ensure peace to the Oosbegs themselves. On the other hand, in treating with Russia, he contended that we should best consult our interests by basing all our arguments on the one broad principle of humanity. "It might not be amiss," he wrote, "frankly to put it to the Court of St. Petersburg whether they, on their part, will not

1838.

desist from a jealousy which is injuring us both, and many people connected with us. - Whether, ceasing from an unworthy policy, which seeks to keep alive a spirit of disaffection among the thousands whom it is our high aim to settle and enlighten, they will not generously unite with us in an endeavour peaceably to abolish rapine and slavery ; to make safe trade roads to their own possessions near Toorkistan ; and, in the words of their servant, Baron Mejendorf, '*de faire germer, et d'étendre dans cette partie de l'Asie, les bienfaits de la civilisation Européenne.*' Let us direct," he added, "the vast means prepared to the accomplishment of the greatest possible end, and while we are in a position to speak with effect, endeavour to lay the foundation of the grand beneficial influence that we ought to exercise over the long-neglected tribes of Western Asia ! Suppose, however, that the above great project should entirely fail ; that at the very outset the Oosbegs should reject our anti-slavery suggestions, or the Russians haughtily decline our interference, would our labour be lost ? By no means. The cost of our mission would be well exchanged for increased knowledge of countries, in which, sooner or later, we shall be obliged to play some part, and for more positive notions than we now possess of the danger against which we have to provide ; while it is probable that though the Oosbegs might desire to be left to fight their own battles with the Russians and Persians, they would accept overtures of a generally amicable nature from us that might have some way for the extension of our commercial relations beyond Afghanistan, which we hope to settle."

These were suggestions not to be lightly regarded, at a time when the designs of Russia in the East were disturbing the serenity of the English Cabinet, and a British army was about to march into Central Asia. There might be more ardour and enthusiasm in Arthur Conolly than were likely to recommend him to official men ; but there was a good substratum of sound sense at the bottom of his recommendations, and the authorities were not disinclined to avail themselves of the services of a man so eager to do anything and to suffer anything in so great a cause. At first, they were minded to send him directly from England to Toorkistan, with credentials from the Home Government ; but afterwards they determined only to recom-

1839. mend such a mission to the Governor-General, and therefore they sent him to India with letters to Lord Auckland, and with 500*l.* in his pocket for the expenses of his journey. He was to travel by the way of Vienna, Constantinople, Armenia, and the Persian Gulf, and acquire, as he went, information that might be useful to his Government, and smoothe the way for his future operations on the banks of the Oxus and the Jaxartes.

Return to the East.

On the 11th of February, 1839, Arthur Conolly left London, and made for the Austrian capital. There he had an interview with the great minister and arch-diplomatist, Metternich, to whom he explained in detail our Central-Asian policy, and thereby removed some erroneous impressions which had been made upon his mind. It happened, also, that at that time an envoy from the Shah of Persia (Hoossein Khan by name) was halting at Vienna on his way to England. It was obviously a great thing that Conolly should hold frequent communication with the Elchee, and it was desirable, at the same time, that it should be as little formal and ceremonious as possible. So the English officer quartered himself at the hotel where the Persian minister was residing, and they soon established familiar intercourse with each other. This Hoossein Khan appears to have been a shrewd fellow, with some sense of humour in him. At one of the interviews, the details of which Conolly afterwards noted down, the English officer hinted that the Persian minister was prejudiced against Mr. M'Neill. "Not at all," said Hoossein Khan. "We have always been the best of friends. He has lived at my house for days together. Indeed, I owe him my highest appointment. When it was proposed to send me as Envoy to England, M'Neill represented that I had not rank enough. 'Why,' replied the Shah, 'Hoossein Khan is of a very ancient family. He is Adjutant-General, and he is my foster-brother. Moreover, we received the other day Mr. Ellis from your Crown. Now, I'll engage that the Sovereign of England has at least three hundred subjects equal in station to Mr. Ellis, whilst I have not ten equal to Hoossein Khan.' 'Your Majesty forgets,' said M'Neill, 'that Mr. Ellis was a Privy Councillor.' 'Very

1839.

well,' said the Shah, 'we will add this dignity to Hoossein Khan's titles,' and I was made a *Preevy-Koonsillah* from that day."*

The case was well argued upon both sides, but with no result. The Persian was as tenacious of his opinions as the Englishman; and it must be admitted that he had a way of stating the case in favour of his master, which, if not always truthful, had a very plausible appearance of truth. It is instructive to see the different glosses which two men can put upon the same event, as seen from the sides of their respective nationalities. Thus the well-known story of the seizure of the British Courier, which did so much to embitter our relations with Persia, as seen from the Persian side, was rather a wrong suffered by them than a wrong done to the English. "The Shah never thought," said the Persian, "of injuring India. He went to Herat to chastise rebels who continually murdered or sold his own subjects. Then comes your Elchee and prohibits punishment and redress, and when he finds his representations unheeded (how could the Shah prefer them to the cries of his own people?), he intrigues with the Prince of Herat, sends a messenger there secretly, and when this fellow is caught returning in Afghan clothes, like a spy as he was, and was seized as anybody in any country would have been in such circumstances,† his short imprisonment is magnified, his interested statements are taken in preference to the testimony of respectable men who were lookers-on, and knew everything, and we, who had a right to be the complainants, are made to appear the party in fault." Again, taking a comprehensive view of the whole question, Hoossein Khan said: "You talk of our acting against your interests, and our own real interests; but are we ever to sacrifice what we think to be ours, to your notions for us, or to your precautions for yourselves? The question of Persian policy lies in a small space, and the sooner it is reduced to its essence the better. We are situated between you and Russia, being weaker than either of you; we

* This conversation really took place between Mahomed Shah and Major Rawlinson, who conveyed to the royal camp at Nishapoor Mr. M'Neill's protest against Hoossein Khan's appointment as minister to England.

† The Duke of Wellington is said to have observed, that if he had been in the Shah's place he should have hanged Mahomed Ali Maafee as a spy; and nothing is more probable than that he would.

1839.

therefore want support from one or the other. If you will give it, good ; if not, we must just take to those whom we like least, and make the most of them, whether it pleases you or not. The Shah will never give up his claims upon Afghanistan : why should he resign what he can take with ease, purely to soothe a fear of the British Government ? The whole country up to Caubul was ready to submit to him when he left Herat, and will prove so whenever he advances his standard again. You misinterpret his Majesty's generosity in retiring at your request, and think you gained your wish by sending troops to Karrak ; you encourage revolt in the South ; does it not strike your acute penetration that we can play the last game, if need be, in Hindostan ? We can ; and if you provoke us too far, we will." To this Conolly replied : " Your admissions now go far to justify our proceedings in Afghanistan. Your very threat of using your political influence against our repose in India, is quite reason enough for us to prevent your establishing it any nearer, by the fair way that your hostile conduct has opened to us." If this was an empty threat that the Persian uttered, not a clear declaration of the settled policy of his Government, it is certain that we did not wait very many years to see how effectually it could be converted into a fact.

At Constantinople.

From Vienna, Arthur Conolly made his way to Constantinople. There most propitiously it happened that he found an Envoy from Khokund—one of the very Oosbeg States which he desired to wean from their inhuman habits. The chiefs of Central Asia had, and still have, unbounded faith in the Sooltan. They believe that his power is unlimited, and that he can rescue them from all their difficulties and dangers. As I write, the Khan of Khokund has an Envoy, if not two, at Constantinople.* To Conolly, this circumstance of the presence of the Khokundee at the Ottoman capital was one of happy augury ; and he determined to turn it to the best possible account. So he soon made the acquaintance of the Envoy, and began to expound to him his views of the situation in Central Asia. " One of the Shah's pretexts for invading Herat," he observed, " was that the people of that State used to carry off his subjects into slavery ; but this plea

* Written in 1865.

1839.

was proved false by his refusing to accept our guarantee to Kamran's promise that such should not again occur. I don't think that there were many real Heratees engaged in this work.* The Hazarehs perhaps did it occasionally, in concert with the Toorkomans, and it was against the latter tribes that the Shah of Persia should have directed his arms, if he wished to put down the evil, as his father, Abbas Mirza, did at Serria. People say that there are now in Khiva, Bokhara, and other parts of your country up there, as many as thirty thousand Persians taken one time or other from the villages and high road of Irân by the Toorkomans. Is it so?" "Thirty?" was the reply, with a hearty laugh; "thirty! say a hundred thousand, or two, if you will; we've no end of those scoundrels; upon our parts, we find them very useful." "And other people also? Russians! have you many of those?" "We haven't many, nor the Bokhara people either; at Khiva there are a great many." "What do they do there?" asked Conolly. "They do everything; work in the field—work in the houses." "We English, perhaps your Excellency knows, do not approve of slavery at all. Our Government, the other day, gave forty millions of ducats to buy off the slaves of its own subjects." "How? What do you mean?" asked the astonished Envoy. "Why, in former times, many English subjects, possessed of estates in foreign provinces of England, had been the owners of negro slaves, who used to till their lands for the cultivation of sugar, spices, &c. Now the rule in England itself is, that no foot which touches its dust can remain for a moment longer enslaved against its will. The free people at home all cried to the throne that no English subjects should have a slave anywhere, so the Government, not to be unjust, bought off all the negroes from its own people, and declared them free for ever." "You wish men not to be slaves of each other, but only *bundagan khoda*, slaves of God. Good for you, if you do well. Our habits are different." "Yes," said Conolly, "as I learned in my endeavours to reach Khiva."

A few days afterwards Arthur Conolly again visited the

* He had afterwards too much reason to change his opinions on this point. In fact, Yar Mahomed, the Heratee minister, was one of the greatest slave-dealers in Central Asia.

1839.

Envoy, and plunged deeply into the politics of Central Asia; the depths which he sought to fathom ever being those in which he touched with his foot the abominations of that vile traffic in human flesh, which he was eager to root out from the land. They talked about the complications that had recently arisen — of the movements of the Persians, the Russians, and the English, and of the dangers which beset the Oosbeg States. The Envoy asked what was to be done — what was to be the remedy. This was the opportunity which Conolly desired. “I have no certain remedy,” he answered; “but there is one which may be tried. The Russians will invade Khiva, and take other Oosbeg States, on the ground that they have a right to liberate their people enslaved among you. We could not say a word against this, nor would we; for, to be frank with you, if any of our people had been in the condition that theirs are, we should long ago have done what they threaten to do. You must send every Russian slave out of your territories, and never capture any more.” “We and the Bokharians have not many Russians,” said the Envoy; “but the Khiva Khan wouldn’t find it easy to do what you propose. He has a great many.” “How many?” “More than a thousand, certainly. There’s only one way in which I can see a likelihood of your plan being accomplished, by the Russians *buying* all their people. They are dispersed among many masters; so the Khan could not give them up if he wished.” “I don’t think the Russians would condescend to this,” returned Conolly. “Perhaps, however, an arrangement might be made, if you promised never to capture any more. What would it cost to buy the thousands you speak of?” “Not less than fifty or sixty thousand ducats. Perhaps you would buy the whole, and make the Russians a present of them. This would not be a great thing after your millions of ducats.” “Well, we’ll discuss all practicable means when the plan is agreed to. And the Persians! Will you let them go also, and cease from your forays?” “Oh, you must not think of the Persians,” rejoined the Envoy, “in such an arrangement. There are too many of them by hundreds of thousands. Besides, we want them. For the Russians, perhaps, we might come to an arrangement.” “Sooner or later, methinks,” said Conolly, “you’ll be obliged to satisfy both

1839.

nations on this score; but it isn't for me to dictate positively on the matter. The question in all its bearings concerns you much more than it does us. We and the Russians are people likely to quarrel, if we come near each other in the East. We, please God, are well able to wage war with any nation, in any part of the world, but we don't want to quarrel with any people, because war is inhuman and expensive, and because it interrupts commerce, which is the source of our great strength. For this reason we wish to keep the Russians at a distance; the best way of doing so is to be strong and independent (for this reason we are building up the Afghans), and we don't make big professions, so we shall not make big promises. Here" (showing Burnes's map) "is our position, there is yours; you see that we are far enough from you to prevent your entertaining the slightest apprehension of our power, though we are not so far that we cannot do you good in several ways. We should like to confer with you about the means of removing Russia's pretext for coming farther on in your direction. Hear, all of you, what we have to say, and adopt what you like. If you like none of our suggestions regarding other powers, you can open and keep open a friendly intercourse with the English Government, and draw close in commercial dealings with our people of Hindostan." "Very good! very good!" replied the Envoy; "write to your ministers, and we will see the end. I, for my part, will engage that you, or any other (English) Envoy, shall go safely up there and back."

Again and again the Envoy pressed Conolly to wait until he himself had received from the Sooltan his orders to depart, that they might travel to Khokund together; but the English officer pleaded the instructions of his own Government, and declined the invitation. In truth, he had already made a longer halt at Constantinople than was consistent with the wishes of the authorities in England, who censured him for his delay. But he had been doing good work. His conferences with the Envoy from Khokund had done much to detach that worthy from the grasp of Russian diplomacy, which would have had it all its own way, if Conolly had not been at Constantinople to exercise that benign influence which few men could resist. He parted on the best possible terms

Departure for
India.

1839. from the Oosbeg agent, carrying with him all sorts of friendly assurances and some pledges ; and on the 22nd of August he left Constantinople, *en route* to Baghdad, intending to reach Samsoun as the first stage in his journey. But learning that the road thence to Diarbekir was infested with bands of plunderers, and scarcely passable, he landed at Trebizonde, and, by the Consul's advice, proceeded to Erzeroum, where he arrived early in September. After a halt of two days, he resumed his journey, furnished with letters for his safe protection to the authorities of the province, and before the end of October—having passed a week at Baghdad *en route*, where he first made the acquaintance of Major Rawlinson—he had reached Bushire in the Persian Gulf, where Major Hennell, the British Resident, not having immediately at his command a Government vessel, sent Conolly forward in a fast-sailing merchant-ship to Bombay, which place he reached on the 13th of November, 1839.

From Bombay he made his way to Calcutta, saw the Governor-General, expounded his views, and received the confidences of Lord Auckland. Nothing could have been more propitious than the conjuncture. There was a bright flush of success over all our policy in Afghanistan. In Arthur Conolly's words, we had to all outward seeming "built up the Douranee Empire" again. We had accomplished a great revolution. The *de facto* ruler of Afghanistan was beaten and a fugitive. The nationality of the country was stunned and bewildered by the roar of the British guns. More than all, the great magician, who had accomplished this mighty change, was a near relative of Conolly himself. The Envoy and Minister at the Court of Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk was his cousin, William Macnaghten, about soon to have the prefix of *Sir* to his name—a name not to be mentioned without a respectful and a tender regret, for he was a brave and an able man, who sacrificed his life in the service of his country. The Governor-General, therefore, had no very difficult part to play. As the Home Government had left it to him to find a field of adventure for Arthur Conolly, Lord Auckland also in his turn left it to the representative of British interests in Afghanistan to indicate the particular service on which his enthusiastic relative might most advantageously be employed,

So Conolly proceeded to Caubul, and in the spring of 1840 1840.
was immersed, breast-high, in the troubled stream of Afghan At Caubul.
politics. What was then stirring in his warm heart and in his active brain may be gathered from the letters which he addressed to an old and very dear friend—a man high in place and deservedly high in honour. I do not know why, in such a work as this, designed, however feeble the execution, to do honour to the great Indian services, I should not write, in this place, the name of one who was for many years among the brightest of their ornaments. The beloved friend to whom Arthur Conolly poured out his heart more freely than to any other correspondent, was Thomas Campbell Robertson, a member of the Bengal Civil Service, who at this time was Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, and Provisional Governor-General of India. He had risen to this high station after a blameless career of more than thirty years of beneficent work, in many parts of the country, and in many departments of the service. With a largeness of official zeal, which ever kept him in the front rank of his cotemporaries, he combined a genuine love of European literature, which was a source of unfailing refreshment to him in his non-official hours, and made him a delightful companion to the cherished few whose intercourse he sought. He had ever a high sense of justice—of that justice which has its root in a generous and sympathising nature—and he groaned in bitterness of spirit over the inroads of that new faith which, during the later stages of his career, tended towards the absorption of the native principalities and the subversion of the ancient aristocracy of India. Few members of the enlightened service to which he belonged had larger or sounder views of Indian policy; but a physical infirmity, which crept upon him in the prime of his life, debarred him from taking his right place in the public eye among the Indian statesmen of his generation, at a time when the services of Indian statesmen were in great national request. And I am not sure whether his good old-school opinions, which he had lived to see disowned by a new race of civilians, did not help to keep him in the background. Nothing, at all events, could convince him that such was not the case.

There were circumstances of a domestic nature which caused

1840.

Mr. Robertson to take a deep interest in the fortunes of the young Cavalry officer, and which bound Arthur Conolly to the veteran civilian in bonds which at times may have been very painful to him, but which he would not have severed for the world. I have said that what was stirring in the soldier's warm heart was freely communicated to his friend, who well knew all his sorrows. No one could understand better than Mr. Robertson the yearning desire for continual excitement which at that time was gnawing Arthur Conolly's breast ; no one could appreciate better the full force of every word he wrote—its tenderness, its generosity, its consideration for another—when after much that, profoundly touching as is the interest of it, I cannot bring myself to make public, he proceeded to say : “ Those feelings have more force with me than ever now, because I am about to undertake a journey, which is not without risks to life, and if mine should end in Tartary, I would not have her fancy it shortened or carelessly ventured in consequence of my disappointed love for her. You will be able, if necessary, to explain that the cause I go upon is one which every man must be proud and eager to peril his life for—the noblest in which he could fall ; and you may without hesitation assure her, that I have regained a cheerful mind, and only hope that the same unfailing spirit of goodness who has surrounded me with objects to make life a great blessing will give her the best gifts of earth, and make her eternally happy in heaven, where all separations and inquietudes will be healed. I meant but to say a few words on this subject when I began it, and yet after a whole sheet was not half satisfied with what I have written. You will divine my thoughts more clearly than I have expressed them, and will forgive my prolixity. It was like your kindness to answer for my motive in halting at Constantinople. I only got reproof for setting aside Talleyrand's motto,* but I acted honestly, and the more the politics of Toorkistan open upon us, the more am I satisfied that my conduct was wise. I trust that I shall prove it by gaining all that you kindly wish me to obtain on the Jaxartes. Many thanks for your offer of Baber's Memoirs, but I have already provided myself with a copy. It will indeed be interesting to read the history and

* “ Surtout, monsieur, point de zèle.”

1840.

thoughts of this great man in the land of his birth. You ask for my sentiments on Afghan affairs as modified by personal observation. After I had ended my late journey through the country from Sukkur to Jellalabad, I submitted the impressions which I had noted on the way to Sir William Macnaghten, who is the person best qualified to judge and correct them. I consider the move into this country unavoidable and politic; but did *I not* think so, I would exclaim against the faintest thought of going back again. The recent hesitation is likely to embarrass greatly if not to ruin us, whereas if we resolutely and literally set ourselves to consolidate the nationality of the Afghans and to get them good government, we shall after some years gain a full return for our money, and see that we have been the instruments of incalculable good. I feel very confident about all our policy in Central Asia, for I think that the designs of our Government there are honest, and that they will work with a blessing from God, who seems now to be breaking up all the barriers of the long closed East, for the introduction of Christian knowledge and peace. It is deeply interesting to watch the effects that are being produced by the exertions of the European powers—some, selfish and contrary, others, still selfish, but qualified with peace and generosity; all made instrumental to good. See the French in Africa, the English, Austrians, and Russians on the Bosphorus, forcing the Turks to be Europeans under a shadow of Mohammedanism, and providing for the peaceful settlement of the fairest and most sacred countries in the world. Will you turn aside when you go home at the end of next year to see ‘those blessed acres which Our Saviour trod?’ Syria, it seems, is to revert to the Porte. If so, and the new Sultan acts up to the ‘Hatti Scherifs’ (Khat-e-Shereef) which he published soon after his accession, the now eager desire of the Jews to return to the Holy Land of their fathers will find speedy gratification. Did you attentively read that Khat-e-Shereef? If not, it may interest you to peruse the copy which I enclose. It has been considerably fingered, for I have been concocting from it an address which we hoped Shah Soojah would adopt; but his Majesty, I regret to say, ran a cold eye over the production, and said it was much too refined for his lieges; that they had too much wind in their

1840.

heads already, and that he would consider of something brief and more suited to their cur-like understandings. This is not quite the mood for an Afghan regenerator. Sir William Macnaghten deals very tenderly with him, and probably this brings him round to points which our impatient desire for reform would overleap. If the Envoy had a *carte blanche* at the Calcutta treasury, and could say, 'I'll give your Majesty so much to do so and so,' we should get on better and faster, but Lord A. already begins to ask when the Shah will be able to keep himself, while the King answers that proposal with 'Give me time to see what my means really are,' and looks anxiously out for members of his body politic to which he may apply the screw. You and Sir James Carnac must back Sir William against the easy-going secretaries, who, quietly entrenched within the Ditch, rave about economy, and sententiously recommend prudence. If we treat the Toorkistan question liberally, we shall, I think, secure the great position which we have now gained, and make our jealousy of Russian advance in this direction the means of purifying and enriching to our future advantage the whole of Oosbeg Tartary. You will have heard that my route has been changed, and that I and Major Rawlinson are to proceed in the first instance to the head-quarters of General Per-owsky, or -offsky, there to see that he does not exceed the Emperor's declarations, and I hope quietly to commence the arrangement which it is proposed to base upon Kokund. You saw the 'instructions' issued to me for my mission to the latter state, and probably guessed that I followed the usual practice of Envoys in drawing them up for myself. I am very glad that you approved of their tenor. Sir James Carnac has also written his approval of this mission, and comforted me with expressions like yours for the jobation that I got from home for delaying at Constantinople. His honour, moreover, very kindly sent me a public acknowledgment that my labours in this journey were esteemed, the which I add to the papers now forwarded to please my brother, who thinks more about me than I deserve. Lord Auckland also wrote very kindly to me."

It had been arranged that Captain Conolly and Major Rawlinson should proceed together to the Russian camp at

1840.

Khiva, but the failure of General Peroffski's expedition had caused this plan to be abandoned; and Lord Auckland was growing more and more distrustful of the benefits of extending the "great game" all over Central Asia. Eager for action as Conolly was, the folding up of a scheme which, according to his perceptions, embraced nothing less than a grand Anti-slavery Confederation, was a heavy disappointment to him. "I was greatly disappointed," he wrote to the same dear old friend at the end of May, "when Lord Auckland's prohibitory letter arrived, for I had set my heart upon this nobly-stirring employment, and when the chance of it seemed removed, I felt the blank that a man must feel who has a heavy grief as the first thing to fall back upon; but then, this very sorrow operated to compose me, showing that I ought to sit loose to lesser disappointments. Now things look promising; but the Governor-General is so anxious to get off without embarking in anything new, that he may put a second veto upon it, at least on onward progress. I send you my Toorkish notions, contained in two letters to Lord Auckland, with a continuation of the proceedings of which I inflicted a first part upon you. Please send all on, when perused, to my brother William at Saharunpore, under frank. I am ashamed of the first page now that I read its murmuring tenor, but it is dark, and just post-time, and you will forgive my groans. I never utter them to anybody else. I hope to hear from you before we start. Write me your sentiments on my Toorkistan policy. Macnaghten will forward them after me, and it will be both a satisfaction to hear from you and a benefit to hear your suggestions. You need not care to write freely, for I am sure you will write nothing to offend the Ooroos, should your letter—which is not probable—fall into their hands. I am sure that extended liberality is the policy. If you agree with me, back the scheme."

Upon this great question of the extension of our diplomacy in Toorkistan, the highest authorities were divided. Sir Alexander Burnes was strongly opposed to the scheme, as one involving extraordinary risks;* but Sir W. Macnaghten had

* The letters of Burnes to Dr. Lord, in 1840, are full of emphatic protests against this expedition. During the preparation of the preceding Memoir, I noted down a number of passages illustrative of his opinions upon this subject, from which I take the following as sufficient for the purpose: "March

1840.

imbibed some of the enthusiasm of his earnest-minded relative, and had consented to impress upon the Governor-General the

26. Arthur Conolly has gone to Jellalabad. He is flighty, though a very nice fellow: he is to regenerate Toorkistan, dismiss all the slaves, and looks upon our advent as a design of Providence to spread Christianity. 'Khiva is subdued by Russia,' said I. 'Bokhara is her ally, and Kokan not inimical, if not friendly. How, then, is the league to be formed, and how are you to get two hundred thousand Kuzzilbash slaves given up for nothing? It must be done. Yes, with the wand of a Prospero!!!' "April 5. But what will you say to the astounding announcement that Arthur Conolly and Major Rawlinson are to go to Kokan? It seems mighty civil to take all the work out of you, and send another to reap the honours. The *Agra* says I am to go to Turkistan with General Sale, but I have not heard a word of it, and have my little wish to do nothing of the kind as to the Kokan journey. I replied to the Envoy that it would be found a tough job, and I thought would only irritate Russia the more, that Bokhara, Kokan, and Khiva were all now under Russia's grasp, and what could we do there? That as to Bokhara, indeed, a mission there might, if it would be received, avail us as letting us publish our views." "April 15. I told you that, if an opportunity offered, I would have my say on this crotchet of Conolly going to Kokan, and with my 'observations' I said to Macnaghten that you were a little startled at 'being superseded towards Kokan by Conolly,' as I thought it the most delicate way to convey my coincidence with your views. I received his reply yesterday, and send it, as it also concerns you on other points. The Envoy's logic is very bad. Conolly, it is true, applied to go to Khiva while in England, and Sir J. Hobhouse referred the matter to the Governor-General for consideration. When he got to Constantinople he met a Kokan agent, and so much was he taken that he stopped, and referred to England the propriety of bringing an Oosbeg agent to London, and pointed out the advantages of an alliance with Kokan. For this he got a wig for delaying at Constantinople, and the wig he gave me to read. How, after this,

Macnaghten can bring himself to believe that 'Conolly has express instructions from the home authorities to be employed in that quarter' (Kokan), I know not. Never you mind, the journey is not feasible; and if it is, the *cui bono* is not apparent, and I should be sincerely sorry to see you employed on it. . . . Since Conolly received my 'observations,' I have not heard from him, but Ferris writes that 'Conolly appears bent on taking the trip to Kokan.'" "May 13. There is something new: Kokan pronounced impracticable, and Conolly going on a mission to the Russian camp, consequent on instructions from Lord Auckland to address General Peroffski. The plan was matured when I was at Pughman, and sent out, cut and dry, to me, saying that I was the man to go, but I could not be spared, and my health had not been very good!! I struck all out about my health, and offered to go at once; to prevent all mistakes, however, I wrote to the Envoy officially, and as my letter will explain much, I send it and his reply." "May 26. Of the Khivan expedition under Conolly I have nothing new to communicate, further than that Rawlinson and he are preparing, and their start is to be regulated by the arrival of a Khivan Elchee (God save the mark!) *viâ* Candahar. I think they cool upon it, but perhaps I am wrong, and you shall hear further particulars in my next." . . . "June 13. Conolly having been beaten out of Kokan . . . has chalked out for himself a mission to Bokhara to release Stoddart, but it does not seem to be entertained. He will stand a fair chance of keeping Stoddart company if he goes, but it is very disgraceful we can do nothing to release Stoddart." "August 26. A. Conolly now says he will start on Friday, but what he goes for it would be impossible to say, seeing that Shakespear states, in his last despatch, that the Khan of Khiva had given up to him all his Russian prisoners, and that he was about to start with them for the first Russian fort; if so, what is A. Conolly to do? I would not mind betting he will never go at all, and if he goes, how is he to get on with this confederacy forming ahead?"

1840,

advantages that might ensue from Conolly's mission to Khokund. Whilst the question was still in abeyance, about the middle of July, the latter wrote to Major Rawlinson, at Candahar, saying: "Spite of all the encouragements to persevere that Todd's letters from Abbott and Shakespear afford, Burnes persists in believing that all interference in Toorkistan on our part has been and will be 'insanity.' 'Our rear,' he says, 'is not secure enough.' Then make it more so. But don't, for this imperfect reason, give up as lost the important ground in front, upon the independence of which from Russian control depends your retaining the necessary footing that you have gained in Afghanistan. Our endeavour to form a peaceful and just confederation of the Oosbeg powers for the preservation of their independence, cannot commit us in any way, while the knowledge gained in the endeavour (supposing a failure, which I do not) will better enable us to resort to the *ultima ratio*, if the Ooroos should force such an appeal upon us. I was much gratified by a perusal of Shakespear's letter; it shows him to be a man of ready apprehension and sound sense, and has given Sir William a very favourable idea of his capacity, which he will not fail to report to the Governor-General. I shall be glad to think that I have such a fellow-labourer in the field, if I am sent to any part of it, which appears more than ever probable, though not yet positive—though I have no end of regret that we did not start at once for the Jaxartes together. I think it *must* end in my going to Khokund, probably *viâ* Khiva, with the Envoy thence, YakooB Bai, with whom I have established great croneyism, in order that I may communicate Sir William's last instructions to Shakespear. Perhaps I may come round by Bokhara, if the Ameer relents upon the last forcible appeal that Sir William is about to make to him through two Sahibzadehs, whom Shah Soojah sends with a letter recapitulating all that he and his allies, the English, have done to disabuse the Commander of the Faithful of unjust notions and unnecessary apprehensions, religious and political, and of all the insults and injuries that the said allied Governments have received in return; briefly ending with a request to know whether he is considered a friend or enemy, and begging to be the medium of a similar question from the English Govern-

1840.

ment, who, considering the long detention of their Envoy, Colonel Stoddart, *infra* their *dig.*, will expect his honourable release as the first sign of any friendly disposition that the Ameer may feel towards them, and require explanation of his conduct in thus treating their Ambassador and missives. I should have mentioned this first, but my brain has got muddled with much copying and original scribbling, this being a very busy day, and John* having shirked clerk's work for the organisation of more Jan-Bazes."

That the mission, which he so longed to undertake, was a perilous one, was not to be disguised. Captain Abbott had gone to Khiva, and had fought for his life. Colonel Stoddart had gone to Bokhara, and had been thrown into hopeless captivity. The liberation of poor Stoddart was one of the many benevolent objects which Conolly hoped to accomplish by his embassy. It was with much grief and disappointment, therefore, that he saw the efforts of our Government to obtain the release of their officer limited to the despatch of a letter from Shah Soojah to the Ameer of Bokhara. Even this was a slow process. "At last," wrote Conolly, on the 24th of July, to Major Rawlinson, "we have got the letter to the Ameer of Bokhara, through the Shah's *dufter* (office), and the two Sahibzadehs propose starting with it to-morrow, which their calendar shows to be a remarkably fortunate day. May their errand be successful! Poor Stoddart's health was drunk last night at the Ghuzni anniversary dinner, among absent English friends, after a briefly eloquent speech by Sir Alexander, who concluded by expressing a hope that if the last of Sir William Macnaghten's amicable endeavours to bring the Ameer to reason should fail, our gallant and unfortunate countryman would be released from captivity by *Baron Bokhara*. You may imagine the accent and energy with which Burnes thundered out the two last words." Then, after a detailed account of other uproarious incidents of the anniversary dinner, he wrote, with characteristic delicacy of feeling: "I felt very much ashamed of myself when my Ghibre lad handed me my cap and whip; and I thought as we rode home, in the loveliest of calm nights, how very much English gentlemen let themselves down by these vulgar outbreaks. I remain in uncertainty

* His brother, John Conolly, who was an attaché to the Caubul Mission.

about the Toorkistan journey. I must go at last, and if so, I'll write all the scientific parts of my researches to you, that you may add learned notes to them." A few days afterwards he wrote again to the same correspondent, saying: "If I ever cool my parched brow in the Jaxartes, I'll drink a goblet of its waters to the extension of your shadow in every direction. You've a great game, a *noble* game before you, and I have strong hope that you will be able to steer through all jealousy, and caprice, and sluggishness, till the Afghans unite with your own countrymen in appreciating your labours for a fine nation's regeneration and advancement. These are not big words, strung for sound or period. I didn't know that I could well express my desire more simply, certainly not when writing at a long canter to reach the post-bag ere it closes for the night. I've been rendering English into Persian, and Persian into English, till I feel quite addled, and every half hour brings one of Sir William's comprehensive requests in a pencil note."

1840.

The month of August dawned auspiciously, and the clouds soon began to disappear. On the 4th he wrote, in the highest spirits, to Major Rawlinson, at Candahar, saying: "Hip, hip, hurrah! I do believe that I am fairly going now, so accept my best thanks for your congratulations. I receive them with a pang of real regret that you are not going with me; but Todd bids me be comforted with the thoughts of your realised important elevation, so I'll utter no vain words. Nothing can be done ahead, unless Afghanistan is properly settled, and I have confident hope of your being highly instrumental to this desirable end."

The fact was that help had come to him from an unexpected Syud Zahid. quarter. His old friend Syud Zahid, the Khokund Envoy, with whom he had discussed the politics of Toorkistan in Constantinople, had written him a letter reminding him of their past acquaintance, stating that it had sufficed to keep him out of the hands of Russia, and adding that he had been to Khiva, where he had seen Richmond Shakespear, but that he had hoped to hear from Conolly at Meshed. Sir William Macnaghten lost no time in sending a translation of this letter to the Governor-General, observing: "The evidence which this letter affords of the importance that Syud Zahid continues to

1840.

attach to the friendship of the British Government, in that he has had opportunity of consulting with the Court of Khiva about the results of manifested intentions of Russia towards Toorkistan, will, I have no doubt, be judged very satisfactory by his Lordship in Council. Syud Zahid shows that he waited a whole month at Meshed in the hope of hearing from Captain Conolly, who gave him to expect that he himself, or some other British officer, would be appointed to join him on the Persian frontier, for the purpose of proceeding with him, *viâ* Khiva, to Khokund; and the stress that he lays upon his sacrifice of Russian offers for the sake of English connexion, is so strong, that I am of opinion we should no longer hesitate to show our sense of his friendly overtures, especially since it appears, from a private letter from Lieutenant Shakespear to Major Todd, that, judging from my former notifications of an intention to depute Captain Conolly and Major Rawlinson to Khokund, he had spoken at Khiva of the expected arrival there of the two officers in company with the Khan Huzrut's Envoy to this place."

The new mission.

The precise objects of the mission were, as officially noted, the establishment of a correct impression, at every place which Conolly might visit, of British policy and strength, as it bore upon Asia and on Europe (with reference especially to our interference in Afghanistan), the strengthening of amicable arrangements with the chief Oosbeg powers, which had shown a friendly disposition towards us, and endeavouring to persuade them to help themselves, and enable us to help them, by doing prompt justice to their enemies, and forming an agreement with each other to prevent or to redress future injuries done by any one party among them to Russia, so as to deprive the latter power of all pretext for interfering with their independence. Either at Khiva or Khokund, Conolly was to learn the result of Shah Soojah's mission to Bokhara to obtain the release of Colonel Stoddart. If by the influence thus exerted, or by other means, the Ameer should be induced to exhibit a decided disposition to atone for his past conduct, and to resume friendly relations with us and the Afghan King, Conolly was authorised to return to Afghanistan *viâ* Bokhara. Otherwise, his course was to be regulated by circumstances.

The general scheme of the mission having been settled and

1840.

the detailed instructions issued—which, after the manner of diplomacy generally, were drafted by Conolly himself—preparations were made for the journey, not the least of which was the selection of a fitting Afghan Envoy to accompany the British officer. This gave rise to some ridiculous intrigues and complications, which Conolly described with much humour in his correspondence. One candidate for the office was said to be “a dreadfully modest and downcast man, who had never been heard of out of the Shah’s chambers, and his Majesty confessed that he was chiefly meritorious as a candle-snuffer. So he was set aside;” and at last the choice settled on one Allahdad Khan, of the Populzye tribe, whom Conolly described as “a scrubby-looking, sallow little man, with a scant beard and a restless eye, which seems to indicate all the disposition of intrigue.” Spoken of by the Shah’s minister, who had said that Allahdad Khan was “such an intrigant that it would take three hundred Cashmerees to make another such one.” “So perhaps,” said Conolly, “I read his visage by the false light of the latter old defamer’s report (he never has a good word for mortal but himself, or some one in whom he is peculiarly interested), and shall find the Khan a good representative of the Afghan monarch. I have shaken hands with him as fast friends and fellow-workers for the great end that lies before us. Our departure,” he added, “has been delayed for another week. I am sorry, and yet on some accounts glad, for it will enable me to cram a little more useful knowledge for the route, and to take leave of my many friends in waiting. Perhaps also I may get my long coming kit, in which are many things which I desire for the approaching voyage.”

At last, everything was ready for a start; and on the 22nd of August Conolly wrote to Rawlinson at Candahar: “We are just on the wing, and I shall make the best of my way to the two capitals for which I carry credentials. Shakespear has really done wonders, and if we can follow up the good impressions which he and Abbott have made, if the British Government will give pecuniary aid, we may keep the Russians out of Toorkistan altogether, and bring about a fine order of things there for every party concerned; and I only wish again that you were to be of the party to accomplish it;

1840.

but, as I said before, you occupy a high and useful station, and can't be at two places at once. If the British Government would only play the grand game—help Russia cordially to all that she has a right to expect—shake hands with Persia—get her all possible amends from the Oosbeks, and secure her such a frontier as would both keep these men-stealers and ravagers in wholesome check—take away her pretext for pushing herself in, letting herself be pushed on to the Oxus; force the Bokhara Ameer to be just to us, the Afghans, the other Oosbeg States, and his own kingdom. But why go on, you know my—at any rate in one sense—enlarged views. Inshallah! the expediency—nay, the necessity of them will be seen, and we shall play the noble part that the first Christian nations of the world ought to fill.” This, however, was only a false start. September found him still at Caubul, “bothered and detained;” but on the 3rd he reported that he was at last fairly off—“King’s and Company’s and Oorgunjee men,” commencing their first march.

Journey to
Khiva.

It happened that at this time great events were taking shape in Afghanistan. The deposed Ameer of Caubul, who had for some time been an exile and a fugitive, was now returning to the land of his fathers and raising the tribes of the Hindoo Koosh in a last despairing effort to recover his lost dominions. A slender detachment of troops, principally of Shah Soojah’s army, posted at Bameean, was threatened by the advancing levies of the ex-Ameer, and it was necessary to send a regiment of the Company’s troops to reinforce them. They started from Caubul at the very time of Conolly’s departure; so he accompanied them, and was present in Brigadier Dennie’s action with Dost Mahomed and the Wallee of Khooloom on the 18th of September. The victory then gained cleared the way for the advance of the British Mission; so Conolly and his party pushed on through the country of the Hazarehs, without any remarkable adventures by the way. Ever as he went there rose up before him fresh evidences of the ubiquity of the detestable traffic in human flesh, which it was the darling object of his soul to suppress. “The articles,” he wrote in his journal, “which the Hazarehs and Imauk take to market are *men and women*, small black oxen, cows, sheep,” &c. &c. In the neighbourhood of Maimunah

1840.

he found that slaves were the representatives of value in that part of the country. One man offered him a good horse, in exchange for a pony and a young male slave. When Conolly asked him if he were not ashamed of dealing in God's creatures, he apologised by saying that he did not mean a slave in the flesh, but the money-value of a slave—"showing," said Conolly, "that men are here a standard of barter, as sheep are among the Hazarehs."

There was a war then raging between the Imauks and the Hazarehs, which greatly increased the difficulties and the dangers of the journey, but after some adventures, Conolly and his companions reached Merv, which is the head-quarters of the slave-trade of Toorkistan. Here the things which he saw filled his soul with measureless compassion, and excited the keenest indignation. And he suffered all the more in the presence of so much iniquity, because he felt that he was condemned to silence. "I have found it necessary," he said, "to repress even the expression of our sympathies for the strangers who are so unhappily enslaved in this country, for the interference of Abbott and Shakespear for the release of the Russian captives has given rise to an idea, which has spread like wildfire through Toorkistan, that the English have come forward as deliverers of all who are in bondage there—a notion which, grateful as it may be to our national reputation, required to be corrected by all who come to Oosbeg Tartary in any political character, lest it should excite the enmity of slave-owners against all our efforts for good among them, as well as increase the unhappiness of the enslaved. To you, however, I may mention that the state of affairs here is pitiable in the extreme, and such as to make every Englishman who witnesses it most earnestly reprobate the idea of our consenting to its continuance for the sake of any political contingency whatever." Determined, as he said, to examine into all the sins of the place, he rode into the slave-market, and saw "enough to shame and sicken the coarsest heart." Slaves of both sexes and all ages were exposed for sale, and intending purchasers were going about from one group to another, "handling them like cattle."*

* To this Conolly adds: "Judge came out from visiting the Bai (governor), a party of Zekkah Toorkomans

1840.

other feelings than these were raised by the sight of the desolate grandeur of the ruins of Merv. His eager imagination grasped the idea of its restoration to its pristine glories; and he exclaimed: "Shall we not, some of these days, exert the influences, which our grand move across the Indus has gained for us, to make Merv once more 'a King of the Earth,' by fixing its borders in peace between the destructively hostile parties, who now keep up useless claims to it, and by causing the desolate city to rise again, in the centre of its national fruits, as an emporium for commerce, and a link in the chain of civilising intercourse between Europe and Central Asia?"

"Our route from Merv to Khiva," wrote Conolly in his report, "struck into that taken before us by Shakespear. From the canal beyond the Murghab, at which we halted to lay in water, we marched seventeen miles north to camp in the desert. In the first ten miles were visible in all directions the ruins of former little castles, about which lay broken bricks

unceremoniously entered, bearing three blackened skulls upon the point of lances, and leading thirty bound persons from Kelat-i-Nadier, who, with thirty-six horses, had been recently captured in a chupao. When they had reported the success of their expedition, these bandits gave the governor two men and two horses for his share, excusing themselves from paying the full proportion of one in ten, on the plea that they had lost or injured some of their own horses. They then presented the heads of their victims, and having received five tillas for each, received orders to parade them through the bazaar, it being market-day, where I, an hour afterwards, saw them again hung by the beards to a pole. Determined to examine into all the sins of this place, which had been reported by my servants, I ordered my horse when the market was warm, and riding through every corner of it, saw enough to sicken and shame the coarsest heart. The camel and horse fair was conducted on level spots outside the streets of standing shops in which the necessities of life were displayed among a few luxuries by the resident traders. At the doors of many of these shops females of different ages under that at which they could no longer be recommended for their personal attractions, were placed for show, tricked in good clothes

put on them for the occasion, and having their eyes streaked with antimony to set off their countenances. Others past their prime, with children of poor appearance, were grouped males and females together, in corners of the streets, and handled like cattle; and I saw small mud pens, a little above the height of a man, enclosed on all sides, into which intending purchasers take either male or female captives that they fancy, for the purpose of stripping them naked to see that they have no bodily defects." So inveterate were these slave-dealing propensities among the Khivans, that even the Envoy who accompanied Conolly on the part of the Khan Huzrut, was carrying on a little quiet traffic on the road. "Every defenceless person," wrote Conolly, "who can be used for labour, is carried off to the insatiable markets of Tartary. We were followed by a small kafilah of slaves from Maimunah, consisting of Sheah Huzarehs and Soonee Imauks of all ages, from five to thirty, and we actually discovered that the children of this lot had been purchased on a speculation by our colleague, the Khivan Envoy, while towards us he was reprobating the practice as irreligious and impolitic, and expressing hypocritical hope that it would soon cease out of all their countries."

and pottery. After the first two miles, we found thin drift-sand lying here and there upon the hard clay plain, but there was none to signify, even to the end of the stage; and it may be inferred that if, after so many years of abandonment, so little sand has been collected here, the annual drift in time of full habitation and tillage would not be left. Next day we marched eighteen miles north to the single well of Tereh, the road generally over sand, which lay half-hoof deep upon the hard plain, though occasionally we had to pass deep beds, gathered loosely upon this foundation. Every now and then a patch of the hard soil appeared quite bare, and we could observe here and onwards to the Oxus, that in soil of this description are set the roots of nearly all the bushes and shrubs which cover the surface of the wilderness. The sixth march of twenty miles, over similar sandy and undulating plain, took us to Tukht—a spot from which this road is named—marked by a broad belt of bare, loose sand-hills, which rise over each other towards the centre from the length of twenty to eighty feet, and serve as reservoirs for the snow and rain-water that fall upon them. We found holes about three feet deep, dug at the bases of the most sheltered sand-hills, containing a foot or more of filtered and deliciously sweet water, and it was only necessary on draining a hole to scoop a little more sand from its bottom, and to wait awhile for a fresh supply to rise into it.” The seventh march carried him on fifteen miles with the same excellent supply of water. The eighth took him the same distance to the “broad dry bed of the Oxus,” in which he encamped, “amongst reeds and jungle-wood, near the left bank of the actual river, where the stream was six hundred and fifty yards broad, flowing in eddies, with the dirty colour of the Ganges, at the rate of two miles and three-quarters an hour. A noble stream,” he added, “but, alas! without anything in the shape of a boat upon it.” He looked in vain for traces of civilisation, and grieved over their absence.

The beginning of the new year (1841) found him at Khiva, waiting for the arrival of the ruler of that place, the “Khan Huzrut,” who was then absent from his capital on a hunting excursion. On the return of the Khan, he received the English Envoy with becoming courtesy and respect. Conolly

1840—41.

1841.

At Khiva.

1841. described him as a dignified and gentleman-like person, about fifty years of age, gentle in his manners, kindly and affable in his address, with a low pleasant voice, and a habitual smile upon his face. In the presence of such a man Conolly soon felt himself at ease, and several lengthened conferences took place in the Khan's tent. Conolly spoke in Persian, and the Khan in Toorkish, and a native official interpreted between them. The Khan was altogether in a warlike frame of mind, and not a little boastful in his speech. "He was determined," he said, "to punish the Khokundees; and as to the Persians and the Russians, let them come." When Conolly pointed out the danger of this, he said: "If the Persians obtain European aid to invade me, I will employ your aid to repel them." "The British Government," replied Conolly, "will doubtless do its utmost in every case to prevent the borders of Kharasm from being broken up; but it cannot take part against any of your Majesty's enemies who may come with a just ground for invasion." "What just ground," asked the Khan, "can the Persians assert?" "One," replied Conolly, "which no third nation can disallow—that your Majesty's subjects carry off their men, women, and children, and sell them like four-footed beasts." But nothing could persuade the Khan Huzrut that any real dangers beset him. He was obdurate and unimpressionable; and even when Conolly told him that, in the event of a Persian advance into Toorkistan, the whole slave population would rise against him, he still smiled at the picture that was placed before him.

It was doubted in the Council Chamber of Calcutta whether Arthur Conolly, in these conferences with the Khan Huzrut, had diplomatically played his part well. But diplomacy and philanthropy are too often divorced. It was said that British influence at Khiva was "based on his (the Khan's) looking on us as helpers to get out of difficulties he does see. If we point out and preach about difficulties he does *not* see, he will think we create them." But whatever may be the soundness of this—and in good truth I do not dispute it—on the whole, perhaps, it is pleasant to think of that eager, ardent humanity which would not suffer him for a moment to forget the foul traffic in human flesh, which was the shame of the Oosbeg

1841.

States, and, as he believed, of every nation that passively permitted it. But it was plain that Arthur Conolly was drifting into danger; and one who was at the same time his relative, his dear friend, and his honoured political chief, wrote to him in the hope of saving him. "I have told you in several of my late letters," wrote Sir William Macnaghten, "that I feared your zeal would lead you into difficulties, and I have implored you not to attempt too much either in the cause of Policy or Humanity. Inveterate habits are not to be got rid of by any sudden exertion of diplomatic skill. You are considered as being a great deal too high in your language and too visionary in your views. You must adapt yourself to the sober and unambitious tone of the Council Board." And then came an extract, to the effect indicated above, from the letter of a member of the Supreme Council. But Macnaghten's letter never reached Arthur Conolly. By what process it came into my hands I know not; but it lies before me as clean and as little travel-stained as if it had been written yesterday in Belgravia.

During his sojourn here, Conolly wrote a long and interesting letter to Major Rawlinson, in which he said: "I have resumed my communications to Sir J. Hobhouse, lest I should be thought sulky at the hard blows sent to me from Cannon-row, since the days in which I experienced his great kindness there. I feel comforted under these severities by a conviction that I acted honestly, and by a strong notion that I acted rightly, which is not saying a very great deal for myself, since it is natural that a moderate capacity which has had its attention directed to a subject for several years should form a more extensive view of it than the mind of the greatest genius upon whom it comes in all its complications with suddenness. Sir J. H., though fiery and somewhat resolved in his first opinions, is a generous-hearted and just man, and when at the end he sees that the Secret Committee has been too rigid, he will, I doubt not, cause all possible amends to be made. If this consummation should not reward my submission, I must just close the account, as the Khan does that of his troubles, by placing against the balance—*Kismut!* Some rubs have been inflicted which don't heal, but leave scars on the heart that go to a longer settling day. Those who give concise verdicts

1841.

should remember this before they accuse a man of anything approaching to deception, as some confidential clerk did in my case with three flourishes of a goose-quill ere stepping into his omnibus for Putney. . . . I shall be anxious to know how Sir Alexander (Burnes) treats this matter. He judged the missions of Abbott and Shakespear to be measures of 'perfect insanity;' but now they have been productive of much good result, I trust that he will see the expediency of 'going ahead' to make the most of the work. Or will he say that the Ides of March are not yet past, and still hook on a caution to my impatient wheels? I do believe that but for Burnes's 'khab-burdar' (take care) to Lord Auckland, I should ere this have taken measure of the Jaxartes; but when he succeeds to the ministerial chair at Caubul, he will see much farther over the Hindoo Koosh than he can be expected to do in a seat which gives him no reins to hold, and I shall look for his patronage of my largest plan. You will see that in my letter to Sir William I have taken the liberty of quoting your opinion as well as Todd's about the supposed sanction to the advance. I have done this in self-defence, lest it should be made to appear that I have marked Khokund as a point on the face of the earth which I, Arthur Conolly, must reach, be it for good or be it for evil. It really is not so. I have already given reasons enough to you for wishing to proceed; but I will cheerfully go to any one of the cardinal points that remain, if the authorities that be so order my steps. I don't understand Lord Auckland's revoke, unless the question has become a duel between the political chief of Caubul and the political secretary in Calcutta. . . . Our mission was to Khiva and Khokund; the despatch does not mention the first place with a limitation, and the Envoy's loving friends display such an indefinite acquaintance with the country beyond the Hindoo Koosh, in which troops were to be placed to prevent the spreading of false rumours, that it is not to be inferred from their communications that they did not mean us to go the whole hog, if such a simile may, without offence, be applied to a Mahomedan country." . . . "Men who think at all about the events which cast their shadows before them," wrote Conolly, in conclusion, "must foresee such questions. Is it fair, is it politic, to send one of their agents half a dozen vague expressions which make him a stammerer where he should be decided,

1841.

instead of manfully summing up the contingencies, and saying in such and such case we would do so and so, and you may give assurance to this extent? The Khan Huzrut will be in in a few days, and I shall be able to discover what he thinks of the demands for hostages. I don't anticipate his making any difficulty. It's quite in the Tartar way, and occasionally affords a convenient mode of providing for troublesome members of the Royal Family. His Majesty of Khiva must now know pretty well that the Emperor would not kill or maim his lease of pledges in the event of a quarrel, so they would be no more than resident ambassadors. The Czar might indeed send such persons to Siberia on their chief's offending; but perhaps the Khan Huzrut would not care much about their banishment, and they themselves would probably have no great choice, so long as they got plenty of tea, which abounds in all Russia. Indeed, according to Captain Cochrane, Siberia is an exceedingly pleasant place. But what shall we say for Russia's return to the barbarism out of which she has been striving in so many ways to grow? Unless Count Nesselrode abandons the point of the treaty, he will be compared to the cannibal woman of New Holland, who, after having been restrained from the evil propensity of her girlish days, and made to educate a whole colony of white children with the utmost tenderness, fell sick beyond physician's healing, and was told that she might eat anything she took a fancy to, when she with dying accents expressed a longing for the arm of a young baby. Give a dog a bad name, and you know the consequence. We do our worst to prevent the intellectual advance of the Russians by abusing them."

Authentic intelligence of the traveller here halts a little. That Conolly was in Khiva in the first week of January, 1841, and that he then believed that his departure would not be much longer delayed, is certain. The statement of the Akhond-Zadeh, Saleh Mahomed, the accuracy of which, so far as it goes, is generally admitted, supplies no dates. But he says that he remained at Khiva with Captain Conolly seven months; that Conolly then sent him to Caubul with despatches; and that when he returned to Khiva the English gentleman had gone on to Khokund. At the latter place he received a letter from Colonel Stoddart, written at the request of the Khan of Bokhara, inviting him to that city.

Departure
from Khiva.

1841.

This letter must have been written before July, for on the 7th of that month Colonel Stoddart wrote to Major Rawlinson, saying: "Conolly is not yet here from Khokund, nor have my messengers to him yet returned. They conveyed the orders from Caubul, and an invitation from the Ameer to return by this route."* At what time this letter reached him is uncertain; and there is some doubt respecting the date at which he entered Bokhara. In one of his last letters from that city,† he said: "The Khan treacherously caused Stoddart to invite me here on his own *Imanut-nameh*; and after Stoddart had given him a translation of a letter from Lord Palmerston, containing nothing but friendly assurances, which he could have verified with our entire consent at the Russian Embassy, he pent us both up here to pay him, as a kidnapper, for our release, or to die by slow rot."

I have always conceived that this happened a little before Christmas, 1841, because at the end of February Conolly wrote that he had been seventy-one days in confinement. But the Russian Colonel Bouteneff, who was at Bokhara at the time, in an official report to his Government, says: "Colonel Conolly was arrested on his arrival here in October last, and all his effects were sold in public; with him was imprisoned for the second time Lieutenant-Colonel Stoddart. The Emir, however, before their arrest, promised me that they should be allowed to accompany me back to Bokhara."‡

Notwithstanding this high authority, I am still disposed to think that Conolly was not thrown into prison before the third week of December. Saleh Mahomed said that he reached

* Captain Grover says: "Encouraged by the kind and courteous terms in which the Ameer granted his request, Captain Conolly, after much trouble, succeeded in obtaining the permission of the King of Kokan, Mohammed Ali, which was only granted on condition that he went round by Tashkend, so that he might not become acquainted with the road the Ameer would have to follow to reach Kokan. After many difficulties, in consequence of the state of the country, Captain Conolly succeeded in reaching Djizakh, where the governor informed him that the Ameer was at Hodjend. He hastened there, expecting a kind reception; the Ameer had, however, al-

ready left that town, and Captain Conolly overtook him at a place called Mehram. The Ameer being informed of Captain Conolly's arrival, ordered his immediate attendance. He was conducted to a tent without a carpet, where he was allowed to remain two hours unnoticed. An order then came from the Ameer that he was to go to the Naib, Abd-ool Samet Khan, who accompanied the army; and this man was ordered to convey him immediately to Bokhara, where they arrived on the 9th of November, 1841."

† Given entire at page 117 *et seq.*

‡ Mitchel's "Russians in Central Asia."

1842.

the Bokhara frontier about the middle of December, and was then told that two days before his arrival the English gentlemen had been seized and confined. And one of Conolly's own servants distinctly stated that his master was not imprisoned until after the arrival of intelligence of the November outbreak at Caubul. For now all Afghanistan was in a blaze. The "great game" had exploded. The Afghans had risen as one man against their deliverers. Sekundur Burnes, who had visited Bokhara some years before, had been killed, and all his countrymen were in deadly peril. What, then, could the Feringhees, who were plainly at their last gasp, do either to liberate Stoddart and Conolly, or to avenge their deaths? So it happened that about the time when Sir William Macnaghten was slain by the hand of Akbar Khan, his kinsman, Arthur Conolly, was cast into hopeless and most miserable captivity.

January passed, and February passed, and there were occasional gleams of hope, and the captives bore up right manfully, in spite of all their sufferings. Conolly contrived to save some sheets of Russian paper and apparently a reed pen, with which, in very small characters, he kept a record of what passed. The journal is so interesting, that I give the principal part of it. The following are the entries of January and February: "January 2, 1842. Allahdad Khan's servants arrived from Karshee: they were brought up to the court outside the wall of our prison, with his horses and baggage, and in the evening they were sent down to the town, to our late residence, we were assured, but we had no opportunity of verifying the statement. We learned from our guardians that the Walee's man, Moolla Shums, had been brought back with A. Khan's people, but let go again—— 8th. The brother of the Topshee-Bashee, who felt pity for us, told me in confidence that Akhond-Zadeh, Saleh Mahomed, was confined without his servants in the Topshee-Bashee's office, and that he remained very ill; also that a messenger had been sent out as far as Kara-Kool to meet him and to take away his letters. Got intelligence conveyed by the old man to the Akhond-Zadeh that we were in prison near him—— 29th. A

Story of the
captivity.

1842.

humble friend of Stoddart's, 'Long Joseph,' [] to the Ameer, very boldly and kindly came on some pretence to the Topshee Bashee's house, and looking in upon us, said, hastily, 'All the Afghans have been given their head.' We judged that he meant our servants, who had been in prison and dismissed, though our guardians and the Topshee-Bashee said that our people remained in our late residence—— 31st. This morning a Mehrum came to desire that we would minutely describe the city and castle of Caubul, and also give an account of Herat. Allahdad Khan drew a plan of the first place; Stoddart was named as the one who best knew the second, but the Mehrum did not take his account of it. We next day learned that he had been sent to the Akhond-Zadeh, who had drawn a large plan of his native city—— February 9th. Moolla Nasir came to ask if we had seen the Peacock Throne of India. As every lettered Asiatic should know that Nadir Shah carried that throne away to Persia, and Moolla Nasir's manner was pointedly kind, we judged that the question he had been sent to ask was merely a pretence, and that the Ameer desired an opening for a return to proper treatment of us. Stoddart, therefore, gave him this, by speaking of his position here as British Agent, and expressing regret that he had not been able to relieve the Huzrut's mind from the doubts which he seemed to entertain of the English Government's friendship. We showed the sad state of our clothes (Stoddart had been obliged to put aside his shirt in consequence of the roof's having leaked over him the night before), and expressed a hope that the Ameer would soon improve our condition. But we both spoke cheerfully, that the King might not think we entertained resentment for his treatment of us—— 13th. Last day of A. H. 1257. At sunset Allahdad Khan was taken away from us; the Topshee-Bashee first said, to his office, afterwards to the Dustan Kanchee's house. The old [] afterwards told us that the Akhond-Zadeh had been removed also to the Dustan Kanchee's; but we have doubts regarding both statements, for the accounts which our keepers give of my late colleague's quarters vary, and a servant of Colonel Stoddart's, who had been sent to the Russian Ambassador's openly with a book, and was said to have been detained at the same Prime Minister's house, came back, after twenty-five days, with his back cruelly scored by

1842.

the heavy-stick flogging in practice here, to say that he had been confined all the time in the 'Kenneh-khameh,' or Bug-house of the gaol—— 15th. A boy Mehrum came with one of my thermometers to ask how much cold there had been in the night, stating that it had been observed to the mark of four degrees below zero. We mentioned that we had been unable to sleep all night for the cold. This day 'Long Joseph' gallantly darted into our room, and carried off a note which we had written to Colonel Bouteneff to inform him of our situation—— 16th. 'Long Joseph' having won a servant of the Topshee-Bashee's, conveyed to us a note from the gaoler. I sent it to him, Stoddart writing to Government through Sir J. M'Neill. We hoped from Moolla Nasir's visit, and that of the page who brought my thermometer, that the Ameer was relenting, but nothing has since occurred to favour this idea; on the contrary, the chief would appear to find pleasure in his servants' accounts of our discomforts, which may be imagined from the fact that we have now been seventy-one days and nights without means of changing or washing our linen, which is hanging in filthy tatters from our persons. The Topshee-Bashee, who looks in upon us every seven or eight days, replies to our entreaties for an improvement in this respect, that our state must be well known to the Huzrut, whose mind retains thoughts of the greatest and least matters, and that nothing can be said to his Majesty about us till he opens the subject. The Topshee-Bashee has, I believe, been as kind to us as he has dared to be. We have had quite enough firing and food throughout the cold season we have passed in his house, and continue, thank God, in good health! We sometimes think, from the Ameer's keeping back Said's and the Akhond-Zadeh's packets, that he must have received the Governor-General's communication, and that he is acting big in irritation at not having been answered from the English throne; but it is impossible to form certain conclusions from his conduct, for it is very often influenced by caprice, which is not very far from madness. We hope that all is well in Afghanistan, and that, soon as the Hindoo-Koosh roads become open, the Ameer will receive some communication which will induce him to properly treat or dismiss us. We beg that Government will convey its sentiments to the Ameer in Persian, as he will not take our word for what is written

1842.

in English any longer than it suits him; and also that no allusion may be made to the above details, for if the King knew that we were able to send intelligence he might treat us worse, and perhaps kill everybody about us. The Russians propose to go about No-roz. We kept Colonel Bouteneff informed of our proceedings up to the date of our seizure, and if he should reach Europe ere our release he may be able to enlarge this abstract, which is necessarily very imperfect. I took the accounts of my mission in English up to the time of our leaving Khokund from Augustin, who kept the whole in Greek. My memoranda or his may be recovered. Augustin is a very honest and worthy man. Having myself no money, and thinking that Stoddart was about to be sent away immediately, I took from Naib Abdool Sammud three thousand tillas, which he wished to have invested in Company's paper. The greatest part of this remained in Augustin's hands when we were seized. My Afghan servants have all behaved well. I reported that Shah Mahomed Khan, Adum Khan, and Mousa, with one of Allahdad Khan's men, were completely stripped in the Ameer's camp when they carried our letters to his Majesty announcing our coming from Khokund. None of their property was restored to them. My notes from Khiva to Khokund and this place were in charge of my faithful servant (formerly Shakespear's), Gool Mahomed: perhaps he was able to preserve them. In the portion not made up, for every minute of progress one hundred and seventeen yards is to be allowed, the pace of my horse, where not otherwise noted, having been calculated at four miles per hour. In my observations of the sun's meridional altitude, the *lower* limb was always taken."*

* On one side of the paper containing the above were written the following notes:

"Bokhara, February 28, 1842.
"To the Secretary of the Government
of India, &c.

"SIR,—The Governor-General in Council will be informed by the accompanying abstract how far my position here [and that of Captain Conolly] has been sacrificed.

"I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

"C. STODDART.

"P.S. This is left open for the perusal of the Envoy and Minister at Caubul."

The words in brackets were erased by Conolly.

"MY DEAR JOHN,—Keep all friends informed of my health, and don't let them be disturbed by rumours.

"Yours affectionately,
"A. C."

"Bokhara, February 28, 1842.

"MY DEAREST JANE,—Best love to you all. Say something very kind for me to all at Chilham. . . . Kind remembrances to all. Don't believe all you hear or may hear.

"Your ever affectionate brother,

"CHARLES STODDART.

"To Miss Stoddart, Norwich."

1842.

In the second week of March, Arthur Conolly's powers of physical endurance gave way. Fever seized upon him, and believing that his days were numbered, he wrote to his brother John at Caubul, saying: "From our Prison in the Bokhara Citadel, 11th of March, 1842. This will probably be my last note hence, so I dedicate it to you, who now, alas! stand next to me. We both dedicate everything we feel warmest to William, whom may God bless in all belonging to him, for his long and untiring brotherly affection to us all. Send my best love to Henry and to all our dear sisters. This is the eighty-third day that we have been denied the means of getting a change of linen from the rags and vermin that cover us; and yesterday, when we begged for an amendment in this respect, the Topshee-Bashee, who had before come occasionally to our host to speak encouragingly, set his face like a flint to our request, showing that he was merely a vane to the withering wind of his heartless master, and could not help us thus, so that we need not ask him to do so. This, at first, astonished and defeated us; we had viewed the Ameer's conduct as perhaps dictated by mad caprice; but now, looking back upon the whole, we saw instead that it had been just the deliberate malice of a demon, questioning and raising our hopes, and ascertaining our condition, only to see how our hearts were going on, in the process of breaking. I did not think to shed one warm tear among such cold-blooded men, but yesterday evening, as I looked upon Stoddart's half-naked and nail-lacerated body, conceiving that I was the special object of the King's hatred, because of my having come to him after visiting Khiva and Khokund,* and told him that the British Government was too great to stir up secret enmity against any

* It has been said that Conolly had no authority to go beyond Kokund, and that he brought all his troubles on himself by exceeding his instructions. But this is a mistake. Full permission for the journey was granted by the Supreme Government. "As in the present aspect of affairs," wrote the Chief Secretary (Dec. 28, 1840) to Sir William Macnaghten, "it does not seem necessary to continue the restriction which had at first been imposed, the Governor-General in Council authorises you to permit Captain Conolly to proceed from Khiva to Khokund, if he should think it ex-

pedient, and if he finds that he can do so without exciting serious distrust and jealousy at the former place. In his personal intercourse with the Khan of Khokund he will be guided by the instructions which have been issued prescribing the purport of his written communications. Captain Conolly may in such a journey find increased means of using an useful influence at Bokhara for the release of Colonel Stoddart, and his Lordship in Council need not add that he would wish every such means to be employed with the utmost earnestness and diligence for that purpose."

1842. of its enemies, I wept on entreating one of our keepers, the gunner's brother, to have conveyed to the Chief my humble request that he would direct his anger upon me, and not further destroy, by it, my poor brother Stoddart, who had suffered so much and so meekly here for three years. My earnest words were answered by a 'Don't cry and distress yourself;' he also could do nothing. So we turned and kissed each other, and prayed together, and then said, in the words of the Kokundees, 'My-bish!' Let him do as he likes! he is a demon, but God is stronger than the devil himself, and can certainly release us from the hands of this fiend, whose heart he has, perhaps, hardened to work out great ends by it; and we have risen again from bed with hearts comforted, as if an angel had spoken to them, resolved, please God, to wear our English honesty and dignity to the last, within all the filth and misery that this monster may try to degrade us with. We hope that, though the Ameer should now dismiss us with gold clothing, the British and Afghan Governments will treat him as an enemy; and this out of no feeling of revenge. He treacherously caused Stoddart to invite me here on his own Imanut-nameh; and after Stoddart had given him a translation of a letter from Lord Palmerston, containing nothing but friendly assurances, which he could have verified, with our entire consent, at the Russian Embassy, he pent us both up here, because we would not pay him as a kidnapper for our release, to die by slow rot, if it should appear that he might venture at last to put us altogether out of the way. We hope and pray that God may forgive him his sins in the next world; but we also trust that some human power will soon put him down from his oppressive throne at this capital, whence emanates the law by which the Khivans harry and desolate the roads and homes of the Persians. He wishes every soul to crouch before him, and not breathe God's air freely without his leave, nor dare to be happy or at ease. For instance (and we are at the fountain-head of police report), a poor wretch, confined without food for three days and nights in the Bug-house, an infernal hole used for severe imprisonment, said incautiously, on being taken out, that he was alive and well. 'He is, is he?' said the Ameer, on the report, 'then put him in for three days and nights more.'

1842.

Again, the other night fifty-six grooms assembled at a house outside the city, to make merry on pilau and tea, with money liberally given by one of the Oosbeg men, Rahman Kool Tosh-aba, to his head groom, who acted as master of the feast; they were convicted of having got together, so all that the police-master could seize received seventy-five blows each on his back with a heavy thorn stick; and because one man uncomplainingly bore his punishment, which was inflicted on all before the King, he had him hoisted for seventy-five more, saying, 'He must have been struck softly.' 'But what was the crime in this innocent meeting of poor grooms?' we asked our gaolers. 'Who knows?—he is a King, and gave the order.' The master of the entertainment stood with his dagger against some thirty policemen, till he was felled by a stone thrown at his head, to let all who could escape; for this heavier offence he was condemned to be thrown from a part of the citadel wall, which gives a culprit a chance of escape with only the fracture of a limb, because it has a slope; he threatened to pull down with him any who should approach the brink to throw him off, and, leaping boldly down, came to the ground with whole bones, and lives, let us hope, for many a happy meeting yet with his friends in this now oppressed city. This is how the Ameer would treat such ambassadors as he dares insult, who do not bend reverently enough before him; but the days for such despotism are passing quick, and he must himself be made to go down before the strong spirit of western civilisation. Stoddart has asked me to put on paper my notions as to the measures that should now be adopted for the settlement and independent happiness of the Central Asian States;—here they are, briefly and freely; those of a man born and bred, thank God! in Protestant England, who has seen Russia, Persia, and Afghanistan, and all the three Oosbeg States. Turn out the horrible Wuzeer Yar Mahomed Khan, who has sold twelve thousand men, women, and children, since he obliged the Persians to retire from Herat and buy out Kamran's family from that principality. Kamran himself forfeited all his kingly right here by his letter to the Khan Huzrut of Khiva, which the latter chief gave me in return for my frank communication to him, and which I sent to Sir William Macnaghten. Thus

1842.

will be gained the only point from which the Afghan nation can lend its weight to the preservation of peace and the advancement of civilisation in Toorkistan, protect its weakest subjects from being stolen or sold away, and properly guard its own and India's frontier. Next, let Pottinger come in attendance upon Shah Soojah's heir-apparent, Shahzadah Timour, with a few thousand select Afghan horsemen of both the tribes, half Douranee and half Ghilzye, to blow down the gate of the citadel, which unjustly imprisoned us, against the rights of all nations, except those the Oosbeks profess. The Ameer scornfully says that the Afghans and English are one people; let him feel that they really are so in a good cause. I really do believe that if Shahzadah Timour were to return, after such a proceeding, to assume the actual exercise of government at his father's capital, taking back with him all real Afghans now enslaved in Toorkistan, whose orthodoxy, according to the Soonees, is unquestionable, and who might easily be collected for a friendly offering, the Afghans would so thoroughly like him and understand us, that every English and Indian soldier might be withdrawn to Hindostan. Let the Shah-i-Shah of Persia at the same time write these few words to the Court of the faithful at Bokhara, sending copies of his letter by friendly and high ambassadors to Khiva and Khokund: 'I want all my enslaved subjects who are not willing to remain in Bokhara, and I am now coming, in reliance upon the only God of justice, to free them, and to destroy the law of thy Mooftehed, by which people who pray towards the same Kebla are sold as cattle.' Let Mahomed Shah lithograph this, and send a copy to be stuck up at every mosque where his authority or influence can reach, in Persia, Afghanistan, and Tartary. This writing will tell the Ameer that his kingdom has been weighed and found wanting; it will do much to soften and liberalise Mahomedan feeling wherever it is read; and if the Persian nation are informed that it comes to them recommended by English sympathy, they will dismiss all irritation of mind that was caused by our checking their military career at Herat. I feel confident that this great and most necessary measure of Persian emancipation may be effected at once, without shedding one drop of blood. I never uttered a word of hostility against the Ameer,

1842.

either at Khiva or Khokund ; but now I am authorised to show how I thought the rulers of these States, who both hate him, may be made to end or lessen their own foolish enmity by his removing from between them. Let the Shah of Persia send a firman to Syud Mahomed Zahed, Kurruck Kojeh at Khokund, whom he knows, saying : ‘ Tell the Khan Huzrut of Khokund, who I am happy to find does not deal in my people, that I am about to liberate all those oppressed men and women who are unwillingly detained as slaves in Bokhara. I don’t want that country ; and if you will send Lushkur Begglerbeggee, or Mahomed Shereff Atalik, with the Khokund army about the same time to Samarcand, my prime minister shall make it over to him by treaty, as the capital of Mawarulneh. I shall give up Merve to the Khan Huzrut of Khiva, to be made the capital of Kharasm, on condition of his doing all he can to restore and content my unfortunate people, whom his tribes have carried off during my wars in other directions.’ The best Oosbeg troops are mere rubbish as opponents to Persian regulars and cannon, and they all know it. Allah Kouli Khan is the best and most sensible man in his country, and he will remain quiet while Mahomed Shah comes against Bokhara, if Shakespear can be empowered to tell him that this is a reform which must be effected, and which Persia is determined now to effect, with the consent of England and Russia. Shakespear can mediate between the Khan Huzrut and Mohamed Shah for the gentle emancipation of those who may wish to return home in the next four or five years, or to settle in the fine waste land of Merve, and perhaps Mahomed Shah may give to Allah Kouli Khan the very large colony of Merve handicraftsmen now settled here, who really yet long for the home of their fathers ; this, and my securing to the Khokan frontier up the Oxus to Balkh, perhaps leaving the Khan of it his easy tributary, would make him agree to all that the Afghans need for the formation of their frontier from Persian Khorassan to the Oxus. England and Russia may then agree about immutable frontiers for Persia, Afghanistan, Mawarulneh, and Kharasm, in the spirit which becomes two of the first European nations in the world in the year 1842 of Jesus Christ, the God incarnate of all peace and wisdom. May this pure and peaceable religion be soon extended all

1842.

over the world!— March 12. I beg that fifty tillas may be given to Tooma Bai, the servant who will convey this to Long Joseph. (Let the utmost caution be used always in mentioning their names while this Ameer lives or reigns.) As for Long Joseph, I don't know what reward to propose for him. He has risked his life for us in the most gallant manner, as few men would, except for a brother; and he is a noble fellow. I feel sure that Government will forgive me for not being able to make an account of my stewardship during my Toorkish mission, and that it will use every exertion to get free and to reward all who have suffered with me, but remained alive. Allahdad Khan had some four hundred tillas in cash when he was brought back, besides his baggage and horses. Akhond-Zadeh, Saleh Mahomed, has served too well to make it necessary for me to recommend him. I trust that God has preserved his life."

Thus ever, as he lay rotting in his noisome cell, he forgot his own sufferings and his own sorrows, and all the great sympathy and compassion of his nature expended themselves on the woes of others. Not only in all this is displayed that tender, loving thoughtfulness for his companions in misfortune, which made him ever eager to leave behind him a record of the claims of those who had done good and faithful service and suffered for their fidelity, but he strove mightily to make his dying voice heard in righteous condemnation of the cruelty which condemned so many of his oppressed brethren to hopeless slavery. For to Arthur Conolly all men were brethren, and it was a solace to him to think that his death, which then seemed to be close at hand, might give power to his words, and that if his utterances could but reach those to whom they were addressed, he might yet accomplish that which had so long been the object of his life. But he had other consolations. "Stoddart and I," he wrote at the end of this long letter, "will comfort each other in every way till we die, when may our brotherhood be renewed in heaven, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Send this assurance to all our friends, and do you, my dear John, stand on this faith. It is the only thing that can enable a man to bear up against the trials of this life, and lead him to the noblest state of existence in the next. Farewell! Farewell!"

1842.

He thought that this letter would be his last, but his release, by the gate of Death, was not so near as then, in the restlessness and agony of a burning fever, it seemed. The paroxysms passed away, and left him, though very weak, on the way to the recovery of such health as was possible amidst all the noxious influences of that miserable dungeon; and he soon again resumed his journal. On the 22nd of March he wrote: "Our last note from this prison, dated 28th ultimo, was written for Shah Mahomed Khan to take to Caubul.* Apparently he could not get off with it till about a week ago. The Naib, to whom he applied for money for his travelling expenses, first required to see both our names written in English on the back of a note, as if he had been led to doubt whether we were still alive. He then made Ismael, one of his people, who can read English characters, copy from a spelling-book, in which Stoddart had noted the Persian meaning over different words: '*So am I to go, I am to go in, so do ye,*' inducing us to guess that he anticipated the Ameer's sending us away in his charge, and finally he refused aid to Shah Mahomed Khan, who borrowed ten tillas elsewhere, and started with a caravan. Shah Mahomed Khan has throughout behaved very well, and will, I hope, be especially provided for. Our business here has been chiefly conducted by Stoddart's faithful servant, Ibraheem, a lad of Herat, who has raised a claim to be particularly taken care of. On the 4th of March, Futoollah Beg sent word that the Naib had taken away his letter for Teheran and given it to Nooroollah Khan (a Persian lad of good family, formerly a pupil of Stoddart's), who was about to return to Persia by the same caravan—an uncalled-for act of interference, for which we did not thank our military acquaintance, but we felt assured that Futoollah Beg would not be allowed to suffer from it. After sending a page with my thermometer on the 15th ultimo (February), to ask how much cold it indicated, as detailed in my last letter, the Ameer took no notice of us till the 13th of this month, when he sent

* There is something not very intelligible in this, as it is obvious that Conolly had written, at considerable length, on the 11th and 12th of March. The journals, which are now printed entire—as far, at least, as they are recoverable—are written in very minute

characters, in many places they are defaced by damp and attrition, so that it has been a task of difficulty to decipher them. It happens that this part of the manuscript is remarkably distinct, or I might have thought that there had been some error in transcribing it.

1842.

the gold chronometer which I had given him, to show that its chain was broken, and to ask if we could repair it—a pretence, the Topshee-Bashee said, to ascertain what state we were in. We had both become ill a few days before from a sudden cold change of weather and the discomfort of filthy clothing; and I, who had given in most to the sickness, owing to anxiety of mind regarding the many persons whom I had been the means of bringing into the Ameer's tyrannous hands, was lying weak in bed with fever when the last page came. The Topshee-Bashee, who for some time spoke encouragingly about changing our clothes, had by this time caused us plainly to understand that he neither dared himself to amend our position in this respect, nor even to represent it to the Ameer. He now tried to save us by telling the page that I had been confined to my bed eight days, and by remarking upon the wretched state of our apparel after eighty-five days and nights' wear. I showed the Mehrum that Stoddart had been obliged to cast away all his under-clothing, and was suffering much from cold on the chest. I experienced hope that the Ameer would take some pity upon us, and especially upon such of my late travelling companions and people as might be suffering under his displeasure. The page said that he would make a representation if the Huzrut questioned him; and he afterwards told the Topshee-Bashee that on the Ameer's doing so, he had stated that the King's last-come slave, Kan-Ali (Conolly), had been very ill for eight or nine days; to which the Huzrut had replied: 'May he not die (or I suppose he won't die) for the three or four days that remain till his going.' We thought from this that the Ameer proposed to send us away with the Russians, who were said to be preparing to depart after the *No-roz*. Nothing else has since transpired regarding ourselves; but through the indefatigable Long Joseph, we have learnt the following items of intelligence about our friends. On the 13th instant Ibraheem wrote: 'With regard to Caubul, *be quite at ease*; thirty thousand persons (rebels?) have been slaughtered there. Allahdad Khan, the Akhond-Zadeh Eusoff Khan (Augustin), the Jemadar, and Meer Akhor, with Bolund Khan, Kurreem Khan, and Gool Mahomed, remain in the black-hole of the gaol; Mahomed Ali and Summud Khan are gone to Caubul; Mohammed Meer Akhor' (the man formerly

in Dr. Gerrard's service, enslaved ten years ago, whom I ransomed at Khiva by order of Government) 'has become your sacrifice; the rest are dispersed. All the papers, except the books, have been burned, and by the Ameer's order, Nazir Khan (Nazir Khira-Oollah) has brought the remainder of the property for two hundred tillas.' In the next three days Ibraheem sent word that Augustin, Bolund Khan, Kurreem Khan, and Gool Mahomed had been released—news for which we sincerely thanked God: their sufferings, poor fellows, in that horrible dungeon must have been great. We desired Long Joseph to keep quite away from them for some days, judging it probable that they would be closely watched, only sending them word to keep a good heart, and to stand fast till after the departure of the Russians, with whom it was possible that we might be sent, and we remain ignorant of the fate of the other prisoners. Long Joseph's information of the 29th January, 'that all the *Afghans* had been given their head,' must have referred to the Soonee Mahomedan servants of my party, between whom and the Sheeahs of Caubul and Herat a religious distinction was apparently made. Our suspicions regarding the worse treatment of Allahdad Khan and the Akhond-Zadeh were but too well founded; the reasons for it do not yet appear. On the 23rd we were made further happy by the verbal intelligence of Long Joseph, that Allahdad Khan and the rest of our people had been released—— 24th. This forenoon the Topshee-Bashee, coming to see us, said, with a cheerful manner: 'Sewonchee—reward me for glad tidings. I represented your great want of clothes, and proposed to buy shirts and trousers for you from the bazaar, but the Huzrut said: "They won't wear bazaar clothes; in three or four days I'll give them dresses of honour and dismiss them." And the Huzrut asked Meerza Juneid which road would be the best for you to travel by, saying: "They cannot now go in that direction" (apparently meaning Caubul). Meerza Juneid replied that the route by Persia would now be the best. After which the Ameer spoke graciously about you. He said that Kan-Ali was a well-informed person, that the Meerza represented that he had conversed very little with Kan-Ali, but that Stoddart, of whom he had seen much, was a man instructed upon all matters.' We doubted the Topshee-Bashee's having

1842. dared to make a representation of himself regarding us. And the old guardian mentioned afterwards that Meerza Juneid had come to his brother's office. Probably desiring to know whether I was better or worse in health since the 13th, the Ameer sent Meerza Juneid, in his capacity of physician, to make inquiries on this head from the chief gunner, when our friend took the opportunity of telling what the Ameer had said about us, in the hope of its being repeated to us. We set but little store on the King's gracious expressions, for he spoke almost in the same words about us to Meerza Juneid on the very day that we were seized; but, connecting this report with the other recent ones regarding us, and with the fact of his having let A. Khan go, we hope that the Ameer is disposed to get quit of us by some peaceable way. What he said about the difficulty of our going to Caubul must have been a blind to his auditors, if he had heard the news which Ibraheem wrote on the 13th. [] as if they expected our speedy release—— 27th. The page who had brought the chronometer on the 13th, came this morning with a parcel of my medicines to desire that I would describe their properties. We felt at a loss how to interpret this visit, as I had, on our first being brought to this prison, given an account of the said medicines, and my labels remained on most of the bottles; but I wrote fresh descriptions for the page, whom the Ameer, perhaps, sent to ascertain our condition without taking pains to satisfy his curiosity delicately—— 28th. Meerza Ismael Mehrum came this morning with some more of my medicines to desire that I would note the proportions in which they should be given, as the labels only mentioned in what diseases they were used. He said that the Huzrut would now show us favour, and our keepers”

A portion of the journal here seems to be missing, but on that same day (March 28) Conolly wrote a letter to his brother John, in which he again implored him to do all that was possible to protect and reward his servants and followers. In that letter he expressed some little glimmering of hope that the exertions then being made, honestly and strenuously, by the Russian Mission, might be crowned with success. “We have been comforted by intelligence that the Ameer

1842.

has released Allahdad Khan* and all my people from the gaol into which he so unjustly and cruelly confined them. . . . † The Ameer has lately been talking, we hear, of sending us away, and though we do not set much store by his words, we think it possible he may give us to the Russian Mission, who are about to depart. . . . I wrote you a longish letter on the 11th of this month, when I was in a high state of excitement, from fever and several nights of sleepless anxiety. The burden of it was an entreaty to the last effect regarding my poor people, and a hope that the British Government would seize the opportunity which the Ameer's faithlessness had given them to come forward with Persia to put him down, and give his country to Kharasm and Khokund, on condition of the entire suppression of the Persian and Afghan slave trade in Toorkistan. If that paper (which I shall endeavour to recover) should reach you, compress its words into this purport and destroy it, reserving my last good wishes for the friends to whom I addressed them, thinking that I might not live much longer. I am now, thank God, almost well in health again, and the news regarding our people has set my mind at rest. Stoddart, also, who was suffering awhile from severe cold, is, I rejoice to say, convalescent. We are both in a very uncomfortable state, as you may imagine, having been ninety-nine days and nights without a change of clothes; but we are together. Stoddart is such a friend as a man would desire to have in adversity, and our searchers having missed the little Prayer-book which George Macgregor gave us, (tell him) we are able to read and pray, as well as to converse together. God bless you, my dear John. Send my love to everybody."

The journal is resumed on the 5th of April. At this time the officers of the Russian Mission were preparing for their departure, and Colonel Bouteneff was still making honourable efforts to obtain the liberation of the English gentlemen. Among the final demands which he made was one for "permission for Stoddart and Conolly to return with him in ac-

* The Caubul Envoy.

† The passages omitted are repetitions of the recommendations on behalf

of his followers, already given in his letter of March 11—12.

1842.

cordance with the promise made by the Ameer." But the answer given to this was, that "the Englishmen had presented a letter to the Ameer saying that their Queen desired to be on friendly terms with Bokhara, in consequence of which he had himself written to the Queen, and, on receiving an answer, would despatch them both direct to England."* Vague tidings of these good Russian efforts reached the prisoners in their dungeon, but soon all hope of release was gone. "April 5. A note received this morning from Ibraheem informs us that the Jemadar and Meer Akhor were only released yesterday from the terrible dungeon. He adds that they were much depressed by their imprisonment, and that, like the rest of our men who remain in the city, they have to support themselves by begging. There has been a little difference between the verbal reports which Long Joseph sent us through Tooma Bai and those which Ibraheem has written. I thought that Gool Mahomed and Kur-reem Khan had gone on the 28th, and I wrote a note for them addressed to my brother John, in which I begged him to destroy a letter which I had written to him on the 11th of March, if it should reach Caubul. Ibraheem now writes that they propose departing in three days hence with Ibraheem Candaharee, another young man in my service who has behaved very well, and they request me to give them a letter. We have resolved, therefore, to send this journal by their hands, and I take the opportunity of explaining that my letter of the 11th of March was written when I was very ill with fever. Thinking that he might possibly be sent away without me on the departure of the Russians (as they had brought a request for his dismissal), or that we might be otherwise separated, Stoddart had begged me to give him a memorandum of my opinions regarding the policy to be pursued towards these States, and I wrote off a hasty summary of these notions which were running in my head, with many things that I was anxious to say about my unfortunate servants and to my friends, when under excitement, which must have made my expressions very wild and incoherent. I hope that the paper containing them remained in the hands of Long Joseph; but he, misunderstanding our instructions, instead of

* Mitchel.

1842

keeping it, gave it to Eusoffee-i-Roomie (Augustin), who apparently went off with it at once to Caubul. When I got better, I drew up for Stoddart the memorandum which he had asked for, and which he now decides on forwarding. It is written in a more calm and less indignant tone than the letter aforesaid, but allowance must be made for the brevity and freedom of the propositions, for we were so liable to be interrupted and discovered, that I could only pen my opinions by snatches, and paper is a scarce article with us. Part of the paper also is a repetition of what I wrote some time ago to Sir William Macnaghten. When I came here, Stoddart did his utmost to put me forward; but now, as long as the Ameer detains him, I shall refer to him, as the accredited British agent, every communication on business that the Ameer may make to me, whether we should be together or separated. He well knows all the people here, and the dignity of our Government is safe in his hands. We have heard that the Russians are about to depart, and that they take their enslaved people with them, but we cannot get at the truth of this statement. Report also says that the Ameer will march with his army seven or eight days hence. There is no doubt that he is preparing for an early move; but though Tashkend and Khokund are named as his points of attack, it is not certain that he will go eastward. This is the hundred and seventh day of our confinement, without change of clothes; but the weather having become warmer, we can do without the garments that most harboured the vermin that we found so distressing, and we are both now, thank God! quite well. We trust that our friends will be informed of our well-being. We have desired all our servants, except Ibraheem (who remains behind to keep up correspondence), to return to their homes as soon as their strength enables them to travel, begging them to make their way anyhow, and to rest assured that everything due will be made up to them on their reaching Caubul. I gave some of my people notes on Caubul instead of pay in cash: these bills may have been taken from them; if so, I hope that their words will be taken for the sums due to them. Hoosseïn, a carrier, whom I put on the escort-list at the pay of twenty rupees per mensem, instead of one of the dismissed Indian troopers, lost two ponies when I sent him from Khokund with

1842.

Mousa Adum Khan, and Shah Mahomed Khan, and Allahdad Khan's man, Huneefa, to announce our coming to the Ameer. The last persons lost everything belonging to them, and they are all entitled to *reward*, moreover, for the risk they ran on that service. Allahdad Khan had three or four hundred tillas in his bag when brought back from Kaishee: probably this has been appropriated by the Ameer with my colleague's horses, arms, &c. Allahdad Khan behaved very firmly in refusing to allow that he was the servant of a Feringhee servant, as the Ameer wished him to do, and did justice both to the dignity of his royal master and to the policy of the British Government in Afghanistan. I beg that his conduct may be mentioned to Shah Soojah, and I trust that all his losses will be made up to him; but if the preparation of the account is left to him, he will make it a very large one, and part of the settlement may, perhaps, be deferred till it is decided whether or not the Ameer is to be called upon for repayment."

A trusty messenger was found to convey these writings to Caubul, and then a new journal was commenced. "When our last packet was despatched," wrote Conolly in the same minute characters, "we deemed it not impossible, from the Ameer's expressions, which had been reported to us, that his Majesty designed to send us away with the Russian Mission. Our keepers rather inclined to the idea that Huzrut would dismiss us about the same time by the route of Persia, and the Topshee-Bashee's old brother talked seriously about performing a pilgrimage to the holy city of Meshid in our company.—April 13. We heard that the Russians had been dismissed with presents of honour,* that Khodiyar Beg, Karrawool-Beggee, ranking as captain or commander of one hundred, had been attached to Colonel Bouteneff as the Ameer's Envoy to St. Petersburg, and that the Huzrut had promised to promote him to the grade of Tok-Suba, commander of one thousand, privileged to bear a cow-tail banner on his return after the performance of good service. The Ameer's own arrangements were said to be completed, and the direction of it certainly to the eastward. An Envoy from Khokund, who arrived two days ago, was not received, but

* This tallies with the report of khelats were received by the Russian Colonel Bouteneff, who says that the Mission on the 12th of April.

1842.

was told to go about his own business wherever he listed. Our informant mentioned at the same time that the last Envoy from Khiva had been dismissed a fortnight before with extraordinary honour, all his servants getting dresses. We now also learned that the heir of the Koondooz Chief had sent an Envoy to the Ameer, who had ordered one of his officers, a Khojeh, styled Selim Aghassi, to accompany that agent to Koondooz on his return. It was thought, we were told, that the Khojeh of Balkh would endeavour to take Koondooz on Meer Morad's death, and the heir may, in this apprehension, have been alert to put himself under the Ameer's protection. This morning the Ameer showed the Topshee-Bashee an especial mark of favour by sending him a loaf of refined sugar from the palace. Towards evening, his Majesty rode four miles to a place of pilgrimage, and on his return at night had the Topshee-Bashee up to give him some orders. Early next morning (the 14th) the Ameer marched out to the sound of his palace kettle-drums and trumpets, leaving us in the filthy clothes which we had worn for one hundred and fifteen days and nights! We said to the gunner's old brother, when he mentioned the Ameer's having departed, 'Then the Meshed caravan apparently stands fast.' 'No,' was his reply; 'please God it will go soon. I asked the Topshee-Bashee last night if nothing had been settled about you, and he replied, "When the Russians get out a march or so, the Dustan Kanchee will make a petition about them, and they will be dismissed." ' The old man also remarked, probably from what he had heard his brother say, that the Ameer had expressed himself to the effect that he knew the Russian Elchee was led to get us in order to make a boast of having procured our release, which made it seem as though Colonel Bouteneff had been endeavouring to obtain our dismissal. Our old keeper persisted for some days in assuring us of his belief that our immediate dismissal was designed, and on the 18th said that he was going down into the city to seek out my Dewan Beggee, Eusoff Khan (Augustin), to set his mind at ease about us; he returned, saying that he had been referred from place to place without finding Eusoff Khan, or any of our people, but that one Meer Hyder, and another shopkeeper of his acquaintance, had assured him that they were all in the town, and that four

1842.

or five of them were in the habit of coming occasionally at night to a certain quarter to hear books read. We had thought the Gunners might have received orders to collect some of our people in order to our respectable dismissal ; but knowing that all our men, except Ibraheem, had left Bokhara, we concluded that the Topshee-Bashee had made use of his old brother to deceive us, in order to keep us hopeful and quiet for another period, as he said nothing about changing our clothes, and kept himself quite aloof from us, which he would hardly have done had he believed what he reported in the Ameer's name. Just before the Ameer's departure, we heard that a British Elchee had arrived at Merve on his way hither. We could get no further accounts of the said Elchee, but judged that it might be Shakespear on his way to Khiva." . . . [Defaced.]

"From the 4th to the 7th of May," continues the prison-journal, "the palace drums and trumpets were continually sounding for intelligence that Khokund had been taken after a faint endeavour at resistance under the famed Khokund General Guda Bai ; that the latter had been taken prisoner, and that the rebellious town had been given up to plunder," &c. . . . [Defaced.] "On the morning of the 18th, however, Selim Beg, the one-eyed Mehrum who was sent at the end of last January to ask us about the castles of Caubul and Herat, arrived direct from the Ameer, announcing that Khokund had been taken late on the afternoon of the 11th. The city, he reported, had been defended awhile by Mahomed Ali Khan's Subaz regular infantry—probably some of the citizens in the fort—in skirmishing with whom the Naib had been led into the battle which the Huzrut had turned into so great a victory by ordering all his army on to the support. A great many of these soldiers, he said, had been killed by the Naib's men, and the Bokharians poured into the city, but the Ameer, on entering the Khan's Palace after sunset, had stopped plundering, and proclaimed peace to all who would be quiet, and he was waited upon by the high and low of the place. The Khan and his brother were reported missing. This news was followed on the 22nd by intelligence that the brothers had been taken and brought in, and that the Ameer had put them both to death in cold blood, together with the Khan's son and his maternal uncle, while he had given all

1842.

persons in the city of Khokund, not natives of the place, a week in which to settle their affairs and depart to their several countries. On the 24th, some of the Ameer's officers were named as having been appointed to the Governments of Khokund, Tashkend, and [], and it is said that his Majesty intended to march back to Bokhara after the despatch of another week's business. We had expressed to our old guardian a wish to get some money from Meshed, with which to reward him for his kindness, and to get him privately to buy us a few necessaries in the event of our further detention, and, liking the idea, he, on the 19th instant (May), brought secretly to see us his son-in-law Budub, employed as a caravan-bashee between Bokhara and the Holy City, who agreed to act as agent in the business after another week. Inquiring the news from Budub, we heard that Kamran was said to be confined in Herat by Yar Mahomed Khan—that the English remained as before at Candahar and Caubul—and that four Elchees, English, Russian, Persian, and Turkish, had gone together to Khiva, each displaying his national flag, and told the Khan Huzrut that he had the choice of quietly giving up plundering and slave-dealing, or of meeting the Shah of Persia, who had assembled a large army for the redress of his people, and waited for their report in order to decide upon his movements. Akousi Khan was said to have expressed himself willing to give up all Persia's slaves in the course of two years, and to keep peace for the future, if the Shah would be a good neighbour to him, while he had sent to Merve a positive prohibition against Alamanee, and he, Budub, mentioned that he had himself met the Khan Naib, a relation of the [obscure], carried off last year from Mondooran, on his way back to Meshed. Budub added that [] the Jew was with the English Elchee, whom he described as a young, tall man; he concluded, therefore, that England and Russia had decided to come forward together to effect a complete settlement of Persia's claims upon Toorkistan, associating in the design the Khalifah of Room as the man who can, with the highest right, denounce to these tribes the inhuman practices for which they pretend to have a religious warrant. The news made us very glad. Our old friend now informed us, on the authority of his Afghan acquaintance,

1842.

Meer Hyder, that all our people had left Bokhara on hearing that they had been inquired about. This made it seem as though the old man, at any rate, had treated us fairly in his former account. Perhaps the Topshee-Bashee wanted to find Eusoff a province, in order to question him about the Elchee from that place, said to have come with the other three from the west. Possibly the Ameer really did mean to send us away at the time of his marching, but deferred to do so on hearing that we had no servants left here, or from one of his incalculable caprices. I had noted, in a detailed report of our proceedings after leaving Khokund, which when we were seized I was waiting the Ameer's permission to despatch by a courier to Caubul, an expression which the Naib heard his Majesty had uttered in his camp after my arrival, to the effect that he would give the English a few rubs more, and then be friends with them again. Though we were not sure that the Ameer had so spoken, the plan seems one likely to be entertained by an ignorant and weak man, anxious to give an imposing impression of his greatness and confidence; and to it I partly attributed the ungraciousness of my public reception in camp, though I was the Naib's honoured guest; the failure of the Huzrut to recover the horses and the property of my servants, which had been plundered at his outposts, when bringing letters to him, and the hauteur with which, at the first joint reception of Stoddart and myself here, he caused it to be signified to us that as in old times there had been friendship between the Mussulmans and infidels, there existed no objection to the establishment of friendly relations between the states of Bokhara and England; but that the Huzrut desired to know whether we (the English) had been travellers all over Toorkistan to spy the land with a view to take it, as we had taken Caubul, or for other purposes; and wished all our designs to be unveiled, in order that if they were friendly they might become apparent, and that if hostile they might still be known. The Government of India, knowing what communications it has sent to Bokhara, will be able to judge the Ameer's conduct better than we can.

“On the 19th (May) the Topshee-Bashee paid us a visit of a few moments, after keeping away for two months. He mentioned that a man with a name like Noor Mohumnud

1842.

had come three or four days before from Persia, bringing a load of things for Stoddart, of which the Dustan Kanchee had forwarded a list to the Ameer—probably the articles which should have accompanied Lord Palmerston's letter. The Huzrut, the Topshee-Bashee said, would doubtless, on his return, be gracious to us, and give us fine robes of honour, and treat us even better than before. About sunset on the 23rd, as Stoddart and myself were pacing up and down a small court of twenty feet long, which encloses our prison, one of the citadel doorkeepers came and desired us both to sit down in a corner; we complied, wondering what would follow, and presently saw heads peering at us from the adjoining roofs, when we understood that the Ameer's heir, a youth of seventeen, had taken this way of getting a sight of the Feringhee Elchees. We must have given him but a poor impression in the remains of our clothes, and with heads and beards uncombed for more than five months. On the 23rd, Tooma Bai was accosted by a man named Makhzoom, known to Stoddart, who gave him a token, and a note written in such bad grammar as scarcely to be understood, in which he said one Juleb arrived lately from Khiva, mentioned that he saw Pottinger Sahib there, and another person named Mooza having come, bringing a letter from Pottinger Sahib, who, he says, is at Khiva, with the Elchee of Mahomed Shah. We tried to get the said letter, but on the 26th heard from Mikhroun that the messenger would not give it up. They had heard, they told him, that we had been made away with, and would wait till the return of the Huzrut, in whose camp they had a friend who could, with certainty, satisfy their fears, and certainly communicate with us, and thought that Mooza might possibly be one of my late servants, who went from this on leave with my dismissed Hindostanees, but he did not understand half the sign which I sent him. We consoled ourselves for the delay by attributing it to the caution of our trusty agent Ibraheem, who knowing Mikhroun not to be a man of solid character like 'Long Joseph,' would desire to put as little of our business as possible into his hands. Our new agent's aid did not slacken, for he wrote us another note to say that a man had come bringing a letter which *Shah Mahomed Khan* had despatched after his arrival

1842.

at Caubul, the which he also insisted on keeping till the Huzrut's return, and that one of the men from Khiva was about to return thither. We then sent him a packet, containing nearly the preceding journal and the notes belonging to it, to be forwarded by the latter messenger to the English Elchee at Allah Kouli Khan's Court, and begged him to remain quiet, letting the other comers have their own way. All the men named by him must have been careless to let him learn so much of their business, and knowing the cautiousness of Afghans, and that the Ameer has news-writers at Caubul, we beg that all my released people, as well as Allahdad Khan's servants, may be enjoined not to name a single person who befriended them or us here, or to allude to the coming and going of Cossids between Afghanistan and Bokhara."

This is the very last record, in my possession, in the handwriting of Arthur Conolly himself. But I have an autograph letter from Colonel Stoddart, dated May 28, 1842, the last, perhaps, from those brother-prisoners which ever reached the outer world. In this Stoddart speaks, with some detail, of the war between Bokhara and Khokund, and concludes his letter by saying: "No change has taken place in our treatment, though hopes, so long found to be deceitful, are held out to us, on the return of the Chief, said to be about to take place very soon." And a week or two afterwards the Ameer returned, flushed with conquest, from the war against the Khokundees; and one of the first acts by which he celebrated his victory was the execution of the English captives.

Execution of
Conolly and
Stoddart.

The last scene of this sad tragedy is believed to have been performed on the 17th of June. It has been described by different persons. I am still inclined to think that the most trustworthy story is that of the Akhond-Zadeh Saleh Mahomed, of whom mention has already been made in this narrative. He said that he derived his information from one of the executioners, and that he had seen the graves of the murdered men. On that 17th of June, 1842, it is said, they were taken out of their miserable dungeon and conducted into an open square, where a multitude of people were assembled to witness the execution of the Feringhees. With their hands bound before them, they stood for some time,

1842.

whilst their graves were made ready for them. Stoddart was first called forth to die. Crying aloud against the tyranny of the Ameer, he knelt down, and his head was cut off with a huge knife. Then Conolly was told to prepare himself for death; but life was offered to him, if he would abjure Christianity and adopt the religion of Mahomed. To this he is said to have replied indignantly, "Stoddart became a Musulman, and yet you have killed him. I am prepared to die." Then he knelt down, stretched forth his neck, and died by the hand of the executioner.

Another version of the closing scene is this. When Joseph Wolff, afterwards, moved more than aught else by the strength of his love for Arthur Conolly, journeyed to Bokhara to learn the history of his fate, if dead, or to endeavour to rescue him from captivity, if alive, he was told that "both Captain Conolly and Colonel Stoddart were brought with their hands tied, behind the ark, or palace of the King, when Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly kissed each other, and Stoddart said to Mekram Saadut, 'Tell the Ameer that I die a disbeliever in Mahomet, but a believer in Jesus—that I am a Christian, and a Christian I die.' And Conolly said, 'Stoddart, we shall see each other in Paradise, near Jesus.' Then Saadut gave the order to cut off, first the head of Stoddart, which was done; and in the same manner the head of Conolly was cut off."

And so Arthur Conolly, pure of heart, chastened by affliction, the most loving and unselfish of men, passed out of great tribulation with his garments washed white in the blood of the LAMB.

It must be admitted that some uncertainty still obscures the death of Arthur Conolly and his companion in misfortune. It has been contended that the sacrifice was not consummated until the year 1843. Dr. Wolff, after all his explorations and inquiries on the spot, was for some time in a state of incertitude as to the date of their execution, and at last arrived at the conclusion that they were butchered in the early part of 1843. "On my arrival at Teheran," he said in his published book, "Colonel Shiel asked me whether Colonel Stoddart and

Question of dates.

1842. Captain Conolly had been put to death in 1259 of the Hejirah (1843), or 1258 (1842).* I told him that the Naib had said 1259, but that twenty months had elapsed between the time of my arrival and their execution. I told him on a second occasion that, according to this calculation, the execution was in 1258 (1842), to which he agreed. On leaving, however, for Tabreez, Abbas Kouli Khan and myself had some conversation on this subject, and he then said, 'I made most accurate inquiries pursuant to my official instructions. You may depend upon it that the information I have obtained about their execution is more correct than your own. Stoddart and Conolly were put to death eleven months before your arrival.' He then said, emphatically, 'They were put to death as the Naib told you at the first, in the year 1259; not 1258.' And," adds Dr. Wolff, "as it is certain that Shakespear's note, with the letter of Lord Ellenborough, arrived before their execution, the information of Abbas Kouli Khan, and the first official statement of the King and Abdul Samut Khan, is correct." But that which Dr. Wolff here says is "certain," is anything but certain. If Lord Ellenborough's letter to the Khan of Bokhara, which bears date October 1, 1842, was received before the death of Stoddart and Conolly, it is certain that they were not executed in June. But the principal authority for this statement appears to have been one Hadjee Ibrahim (a brother of Abdul Samut Khan), of whom it is said that "cunning and knavery were depicted in his very look." This man told Dr. Wolff that "Conolly came with letters from the Ambassador at Caubul. He was put in prison. Then a letter came from the Sultan. The Ameer cast it away with disdain, and said, 'The Sultan is half a Kafir. I want a letter from the Queen of England.' Some time after a letter arrived from the Sirkar of Hind (the Governor-General). This letter," said he, with a sneer, "stated that Stoddart and Conolly were '*innocent travellers*.' Upon which the Ameer was so angry that he put them to death; and I have this account from my brother, Abdul Samut Khan." In Lord Ellenborough's letter the prisoners were described as "innocent travellers." But as the Bokhara authorities were naturally anxious to justify the execution of

* The year 1258 commenced Feb. 11, 1842. See *ante*, page 114.

the prisoners, and as the official repudiation of them by the Governor-General placed them before the Ameer in the position of spies and impostors, there was an evident purpose in representing that the letter had been received before their death.

1842.

I am not inclined to accept such interested authority, in the face of all conflicting evidence which points to the date already indicated. I have not been able to trace anything written, either by Conolly or Stoddart, of a later date than the 28th of May, 1842. The British Army of Retribution, under General Pollock, was at Caubul up to the 12th of October in that year, so that later letters might have been received by our people, if any had been despatched to them from Bokhara. But on the morning of the 16th of September Major Rawlinson met one of Stoddart's servants near Caubul, and the man informed him that he had come from Bokhara, where his master had been executed shortly before his departure. There is reason also to believe that the Ameer caused his English prisoners to be put to death very soon after his return from the expedition against the Khokundees, and this certainly took place in the early part of June, 1842. The evidence, indeed, was sufficiently strong to convince the Government, both of the Queen and the Company, that Death scored the names of their officers from the Army Lists on that miserable 17th of June.

POSTSCRIPT. ARTHUR CONOLLY'S PRAYER-BOOK.

In the journal from which I have quoted so freely in the foregoing Memoir, mention is made of the little Prayer-book given by George Macgregor to Arthur Conolly, which had been so great a comfort to the prisoners. This little book, which has been almost miraculously preserved, served a double purpose. Spiritually it yielded consolation to them in their affliction, and materially it received from day to day, along its margins and on all its blank pages, a record of the prison-life of the captives. "Thank God," wrote Conolly, in one place, "that this book was left to me. Stoddart and I have found it a great comfort. We did not fully know before this affliction what was in the Psalms, or how beautiful are the prayers

1841.

of our Church. Nothing but the spirit of Christianity can heal the wickedness and misery of these countries." And in another place: "Desiring that the circumstances of our last treatment at Bokhara should become known, and conceiving that a record made in this book has a better chance of preservation than one made upon loose paper, I herein note the chief occurrences since my arrival."

Many of the entries in this interesting journal are identical with those which constitute the journal-letters, already quoted, which Arthur Conolly wrote to his brother John. But the Prayer-book supplies an important omission relating to the date and circumstances of the first seizure and imprisonment of Stoddart and Conolly. The record commences with this retrospective statement: "On the 10th of November, 1841, Stoddart joined me at the Naib's, and on the 19th we removed thence to a good house, given to us by the Ameer, in the city, where we were well entertained for a month. At our first audience, the Ameer expressed his resolve to send Stoddart away immediately, and to keep me as British Agent, seeming only to hesitate a little on account of the non-arrival of a reply to his letter to the Queen; but we at this time received friendly intimations that we were both distrusted, and the Chief, after sounding us by different questions as to the way by which I should go, decided to keep us both awhile. We had four or five interviews with the Ameer that month, in all of which he cross-examined me and Allahdad Khan about the object of our journey to Khiva and Khokund, and expressed impatience for a reply to his letter to the Queen—once proposing that I should go home *via* Russia to ascertain why it had not been sent. . . . Towards the end of November reports came that Shah Soojah had been deposed at Caubul, . . . and that, in a word, our influence in Afghanistan had been quite destroyed. The Ameer questioned us about these rumours; we could only express doubt of their truth. But they evidently gained hold of his Majesty's mind, and encouraged him to think that we had been cut off from our support; for after summoning us to Court on the 2nd of December, he, after a loose and querulous complaint that our policy was not clear, suddenly attacked me about our missions to Khiva and Khokund, saying, in an overbearing and con-

temptuous manner, he perfectly understood that the object of our dealing with those states was only to incite them to enmity against him; but that we must not think, because we had got five or six Afghan houses, that we could play the same game here, for that Toorkistan could not bear it. I replied that the English Government never urged underhand war; that it was able, please God, to encounter any enemy in its own strength, and that where it designed hostility, it would declare the same openly, but that it had from the first really entertained towards his Majesty the friendly desires which it had through every channel professed. The Ameer on this accused me of talking big, said he would imprison me, and then an army might come and see what it could do."

1841.

It appeared, however, at the time, that this was an idle threat. The English gentlemen received assurances from different quarters that the Ameer had only designed to sift them, and that he was satisfied with the result. Friendly messages came asking them about the time and manner of their departure. On the 10th, Colonel Stoddart received a despatch from Lord Palmerston, the contents of which were made known to the Ameer, who again expressed disappointment that there was no letter from the Queen. "On the 19th," continues the record in the Prayer-book, "the Ameer summoned Stoddart and myself to Court, and talked long and graciously with us about the continued bad rumours from Caubul. As we were leaving the citadel, a Mehrum came after us to say that the King had heard that I possessed a very superior watch, and that his Majesty would like to see it. I went home and returned alone with my gold M'Cabe chronometer, which on a second interview I presented to his Majesty. He graciously accepted it, and for some time conversed with me very kindly about the superiority of English manufactures." These favourable appearances, however, were deceptive. On the following day, they were told to fix a period at which they would guarantee the receipt of an answer to the Ameer's letter, or else provide ransom-money to the amount of ten or twenty thousand tillahs, in which case they would receive safe-conduct across the Oxus. Otherwise they could only look for imprisonment. "We answered," wrote Conolly in the Prayer-book, "that although we had reason to believe that

1841. the fullest letters were on the road, we could not undertake to say positively when they would arrive, that we did not understand upon what point the mind of the Ameer required to be satisfied, but that if the assurances his Majesty desired could be had either from Persia or from Caubul, we thought that they could be obtained in the course of two months. We said that we were not authorised to give money for our release, and would not consent to do so, as that would be tantamount to an acknowledgment that we had committed crime against the Ameer, whereas we had only been the bearers of kind communications from the British Government; and we begged him to be good enough to await the arrival of the letter which the English Minister, Lord Palmerston, had announced the Governor-General would write to his Majesty." But this reply was not satisfactory, and on that day—the 20th of December—at sunset, they were "conducted to the house of the Topshee-Bashee, or master gunner of the citadel," where they were "confined together in a small room, where the brother and the nephew of the Topshee-Bashee slept to guard them." This removes all doubt with respect to the accuracy of the previous statement that Stoddart and Conolly were cast into prison in the third week of December.

This record contains also the following narrative of the circumstances of the first attempt made to induce Conolly to apostatise. It happened on the evening of the 27th of December: "The Meer-shub came down to our room with the Topshee-Bashee, and ordered me, in a rough manner, to take off my coat and neckcloth. We thought he had been sent to put me to death, and Stoddart, who knew him, conjured him to say what was intended. He replied that nothing was designed against either of our lives, but that I had incurred the Khan Huzrut's displeasure, and that in this case clothes like mine were out of place. Then causing me to go on disrobing, till I stood in my shirt and drawers, he called for a torn and stinking sheepskin cloak and a cotton girdle cloth to match, which he made me put on, and departed, telling Stoddart that he might remain as he was, for that he and his clothes were all right. When the doors of the house had been barred for the night, we heard a knocking without, and the Topshee-Bashee presently came into the room, bear-

ing his axe of office, and after a few moments of serious silence turned to me, and asked if I would become a Mussulman, and remain in the enjoyment of favour at Bokhara. We both thought that he had been sent to announce death as the alternative; therefore, to avoid argument, by which he might hope to persuade me, I told him most decidedly that my religion was a matter between me and my God, and that I would suffer death rather than change. All the world knew, I said, that a forced profession of Mahomedanism was null, and that Colonel Stoddart had consented to repeat the Kulna at a time when his character was not rightly understood here, solely to avoid bloodshed and disorder; but that I had come to Bokhara on the invitation of the Huzrut, against whom I had committed no fault, and that there must be no more of this work. The Topshee-Bashee seemed to assent to what I had said, and told me that the proposal had not come from the Ameer, but that a certain person had suggested it to him. I said I was glad to hear that, but begged him distinctly to understand that, come from whence it might, nothing should induce me to accept it."

This little Prayer-book contained also Arthur Conolly's will. He was very anxious that all his debts should be paid, and that his servants and followers, who had shared the perils of his journey, should be provided for from the residue of his estate. He thought also, with tenderest compassion, of some more helpless dependents, saying: "Among my private servants is a negro whom I ransomed at Khiva. I beg my brother John to keep him, or to get him into some other service, in case of my death. Mohamed, the Afghan boy, whom I was obliged to buy, as reported in one of my letters to Sir William Macnaghten from Khiva, is a willing lad, and I hope some Englishman will take him into service, if he escapes hence to Caubul. He has a mother at Herat, but were he to be sent back in the Ameer's time he would only be sold again. . . . There is an old man in London known to Mrs. Orr, and to Mr. Allen, the publisher of Leadenhall-street, to whom I intended to give half-a-crown weekly for the rest of his life. I send home a year's allowance, and Mrs. Orr promised me the pittance should not fail. In the event of my death, pray let his allowance be continued to him by

1841—42. some of the family. He is a worthy old man." He then bethought himself of many far-off friends, to whom he wished to send his affectionate remembrances. "A great many valued friends," he wrote, "to whom I should like to express my love, come to mind; but I cannot now particularise them. If you meet Henry Graham of the Bengal Engineers, and Mansell of the Civil Service, remember me most kindly to them; also Robert Farquharson and Parry Woodcock; Robertson, late Governor of Agra, and our mutual friend of the same name in the 13th. Write also my best remembrance to Mr. Mack, late of the Russian Mission, and thank him for his letters to me from Meshed. I did not think it necessary to name Mr. Marjoribanks at the head of the list. He well knows my grateful attachment to him." And so to the last, in the midst of his own sufferings, he was loving, and compassionate, and thoughtful for others. Self had been utterly crucified within him.

The little book in which the preceding entries were made found its way, after Arthur Conolly's death, into one of the bazaars of Bokhara, whence it was recovered by a Russian prisoner, who consigned it to General Ignatieff, when the mission under that officer visited Bokhara in 1858. On returning to the Russian frontier and proceeding to Orenburg, the General entrusted the little book to the care of Major Salatzki, a member of his mission, with the view, originally, of its presentation to the Geographical Society of Great Britain. But when it was subsequently discovered that the notes were of a personal rather than a scientific character, it was rightly considered that it would be a more appropriate gift to the family of the deceased owner. So one day in 1862—twenty years after Arthur Conolly's death—it was left at the door of his sister, Mrs. Macnaghten, in Eaton-place.

MAJOR ELDRED POTTINGER.

[BORN 1811.—DIED 1843.]

THE father of Eldred Pottinger was an Irish gentleman—Thomas Pottinger, of Mount Pottinger, in the county of Down, who married Charlotte, the only child of James Moore, another Irish gentleman, whose place of residence, however, was for the most part in the Danish capital. This lady had many and great accomplishments, and strong literary tastes, which might have borne good fruit, but that death cut short her early promise; she passed away from the scene, after a few years of wedded happiness, leaving behind her an only son, the subject of this Memoir.

1811.

Eldred Pottinger was born on the 12th of August, 1811. He was scarcely two years old when his mother died. But he seems to have inherited from her a love of letters and a readiness in the acquisition of languages, which was very serviceable to him in later days. He was docile, and in all things quick to learn; but it was soon apparent that there was a sturdiness of character and a love of enterprise in him, which rendered it more likely that the tendencies of his manhood would be towards a life of strenuous action than to one of studious repose. His father took a second wife, and little Eldred, after a time, went to live with his step-mother, who in due course had children of her own. But Eldred was ever to her as her own son, and he loved her tenderly as a mother. He was very affectionate and very sociable, and often, when his father was absent in his yacht, the pleasant companionship of the boy was a source of comfort to Mrs. Pottinger never to be forgotten. It is an indiscriminating injustice that makes step-mothers the *bêtes noires* of domestic history. The “*injusta noverca*” is in real life a rarer personage than is com-

1811—25. monly supposed. At all events, the relationship at Mount Pottinger had nothing that was not beautiful about it. No distinctions were ever recognised there. The gentleness and tenderness, the forbearance and self-denial, of young Eldred towards his little brothers and sisters is still gratefully remembered; and I am assured by one of the latter, that not until she had nearly reached the age of womanhood was she aware that Eldred was not her own brother.

Early training. High-spirited and adventurous as he was, he was very tractable, and, save in one particular, seldom got himself into any boyish scrapes. He was very fond of playing with gunpowder; and once very nearly blew himself up together with his brother John. His military instincts were even then developing themselves, for nothing delighted him more in his play-hours than to erect mimic fortifications, and to act little dramas of warlike attack and defence. One of these last had nearly a tragic termination; for having, in execution of some warlike project or other, heaped up a number of heavy stones on the crest of the garden wall, some of them fell upon and well-nigh killed an old man or woman who was seated on the other side. But though forward ever in active adventure, he was by no means an inapt or inattentive scholar, and he pursued his studies in his father's house, under a private tutor, with very commendable success. It happened, however, that, on one occasion, when in his fourteenth year, he fell out with his preceptor on some point either of discipline or of learning, and the tutor threatened him with personal chastisement. The high spirit of the boy could not brook this, and he declared that, if the threat were carried into execution, he would run away and seek his fortune in some remote place. The time, indeed, had passed for home teaching. The instincts of young Eldred turned towards foreign travel and military adventure. He delighted to peruse the records of great battles, and it is remarkable that of all the books which he read in his youth, the one which made the deepest impression upon him was Drinkwater's narrative of the siege of Gibraltar. For a youth of this temper, it seemed that the Indian Army opened out a field admirably calculated to develop his powers. So a nomination was obtained for him to the Company's military seminary at Addiscombe.

[I went, not long ago, with a very dear friend, to Addiscombe. The ploughshare had passed over it. It no longer exists; no longer exists as it was in the old days of Pitt and Jenkinson; no longer exists as it was when it flourished as a great nursery of Indian captains. All the old associations and traditions have been materially effaced by the despoiling hand of speculative builders. But a sort of moral odour of Indian heroism still pervades the place, for the desolators have named all the new roads and villas, which have cut the old place to pieces, after such men as Canning and Outram, Clyde and Lawrence. I thank them for this. But it was a sad sight still to see the utter obliteration of all that has twice been memorable in our history—memorable in the days of the *Rolliad*, and again in the best days of our Indian history. With the former such a work as this has little or nothing to do. But the Company's Military Seminary at Addiscombe was, in its time, a remarkable institution, and, in spite of all its defects, it sent forth many remarkable men. It was established first as a training-school under civil government. Lord Liverpool's house near Croydon became an academy self-contained. But after a while it expanded into a cluster of barracks and study-halls, and the military governor occupied the "mansion." It has the proud distinction of having sent forth the finest race of Engineer and Artillery officers that the world has ever yet seen—men whose pre-eminent merits have been recognised by such heroes as Hardinge and Napier and Clyde, who, having risen from the other service, were at least not prejudiced in favour of the Company's corps. There were many grave errors in the system—very grave they were in my time;* but there is scarcely an Addiscombe cadet now living who does not look back with affectionate remembrances to the years which he spent in those barracks and study-halls, and who does not admit, in spite of much which his mature reason condemns, that he grew there in knowledge and in manliness, and passed out with the making of a first-rate officer in him. If it were only for the friendships which I formed there—some of which death only has severed, whilst others, after the lapse of a third part of a

1866.
Addiscombe.

* After that time, some of the graver errors were, I believe, remedied. I hope that I had something to do with the reform. At all events, I *tried*.

1866.

century, are as green as they were in our youth—there are very few years of my life which I would less willingly suffer to slide out of the calendar of the Past.

That the civil and military services of the East India Company, from the time of the establishment of the Haileybury College and the Addiscombe Seminary, increased greatly in general efficiency, is a bare historical fact. Men such as Elphinstone and Metcalfe, Malcolm and Munro, were independent of such aids. I speak of the general mass of the Civil and Military services of the Company. And if it had been only for the fine sense of comradeship which these institutions developed, they would have greatly enhanced the efficiency of the Services. Men who have known each other in youth, and have kindred associations, work together with a heartiness of zeal less rarely engendered between strangers who have reached the same point by different paths. And even where cotemporary limits are passed, and there is no personal knowledge, there is often association through common friends, a traditionary familiarity with character and conduct, and a general feeling of clanship, which are almost as potent as actual acquaintance in the flesh. It is certain, also, that these institutions, which sent forth many accomplished scholars and men of science, did much to improve the general character of Anglo-Indian society, by imparting to it a literary tone, which had been scarcely apparent before. The teachings of Empson and Malthus, Le Bas and Jones, of Cape and Bordwine, Bissett and Straith, and in the important departments of Oriental literature, Ouseley, Williams, and Eastwick in one institution, Shakespear and Haughton in the other, all bore their good fruit; and among those good fruits was a greater softness of manner, which developed itself in an increased regard for the feelings of the natives of the country. Indeed, these seats of learning, with all their faults, were laden with much good to the two Services, and I cannot, now that they have passed into traditions, refuse them a few words of affectionate regret.]

Eldred Pottinger was but fourteen when he went to Addiscombe. Young as he was, he took a good place in his class. But he was esteemed among his comrades rather as an active,

1825—30.

manly, courageous boy; very honourable, truthful, trustworthy, and staunch. Even in his childish days, it had been observed that he could keep a secret better than most grown people. He was sure to keep it if the interests of others were concerned. When he was at Addiscombe he committed a grave academical offence. The story has been variously told to me, and I am afraid that the balance of evidence is not much on the side of the more favourable version of it. It is traditional in his family that he invented a new kind of shell—said to have been something very clever for a youngster of his years—and that he exploded it one day to the consternation of the authorities, and very probably to the extreme peril of his comrades. But his Addiscombe contemporaries believe that he was moved to this exploit less by a love of science than by a love of mischief, and that in reality he merely charged an old shell with gunpowder, and fired it from a mortar in the college grounds. Fortunately, the question is one which it is not material to decide. There was as much good promise in the mischief as there would have been in the scientific ardour of the young artilleryman; and it is far more important to note, that though others were implicated with him, Gentleman-Cadet Pottinger took upon himself all the responsibility of the breach of college rules, and tried to bear all the punishment. It well-nigh cost him his commission; but nothing would induce him to give up the names of those who were associated with him in the affair of the shell.

After the usual period of two years spent at Addiscombe, Eldred Pottinger went up for his final examination, and came out as a cadet of Artillery. He selected the Bombay Presidency, because his uncle, Colonel Henry Pottinger, was fast rising to distinction under that Government. Having joined the head-quarters of his regiment, he devoted himself very assiduously to the duty of mastering professional details both military and scientific. In the knowledge of these he made rapid progress; and in due course was appointed quartermaster of a battalion. Having served thus, for some time, on the Regimental Staff, he was, through the good offices of his uncle, who then represented British interests in Sindh and

First years in India.

1837. Beloochistan, appointed to the Political Department as an assistant to his distinguished relative.* Though he had at no time any great amount of Oriental book-learning, he had a considerable colloquial knowledge of the native languages, which he improved under his uncle's superintendence. But an eager longing for active employment had taken possession of him, and there was that, in the political atmosphere at the time, which rendered it likely that the coveted opportunity would soon present itself. And it soon came. Events were taking shape in the countries between India and Persia, which made it a matter of no small importance to the British Government in the East that they should obtain accurate information relating to all that was passing in Afghanistan; and as Eldred Pottinger was willing to penetrate that country as an independent traveller, his uncle the Resident was well disposed to accept the offer. It was, in truth, precisely the kind of service which the adventurous spirit of the young artilleryman was most eager to embrace; and so he went forth, full of hope and expectancy, as one loving danger and excitement for its own sake, and longing to be of service to his country; but moved little by personal ambition, for he had none of the vanity of youth, and self-seeking was far from him. His enthusiasm was of a sturdy, stubborn kind. It cannot be said that he had much imagination; but he had something still better, an abiding sense of his duty to his country.

Journey to
Herat.

He started in the disguise of a Cutch horse-dealer, and journeyed onwards towards Caubul, with a most unostentatious retinue, and attracted little attention as he went. The route which he took was that of Shikarpore, Dehra Ismael Khan, and Peshawur. At Caubul he determined to push his way on,

* There is an anecdote current respecting this period of Eldred Pottinger's service, which is worthy of narration, though I do not vouch for the absolute correctness of the words in which it is here narrated. One day, Eldred appeared before his uncle in a great state of excitement, declaring that he had been grossly insulted by a native—a horsekeeper, or some other inferior person—on which Henry Pottinger,

amused by his young relative's earnestness, said, smilingly, to him, "So, I suppose you killed him, Eldred?" "No," replied the young subaltern; "but *I will*, uncle." Thinking that this was an instruction from higher authority, he was quite earnest in his declaration. It need not be added that the joke exploded, and that the retributive hand was restrained.

through the difficult country inhabited by the Imauk and Hazareh hordes, to Herat, the famous frontier city of Afghanistan, assuming for this purpose the disguise of a "Syud," or holy man, from the lower part of the country.

Here his adventures commenced. He was eager to explore this rugged and inhospitable hill-country, knowing well the dangers of the route, but knowing also the importance of obtaining correct information relating to it. "As I had made up my mind," he wrote in his journal, "against the advice of the few acquaintances I had in Caubul, and there was some suspicion that Dost Mahomed would prevent my proceeding to Herat, on quitting the place I gave out that I was going out with Syud Ahmed to see the defile of the Logur River. After dark I left the house on foot, having some days previously sent the horses to a caravanserai, and thence ordered those I intended taking to join me at the bridge, where my guide also met and escorted us to his house at Vizierabad, a few miles from the city."

He had not proceeded far before he fell in with a man who had known Sir Alexander Burnes, and who strongly suspected that Pottinger was a Feringhee. "We here met a traveller from the opposite direction," he wrote in his journal, "an acquaintance of my guide, who had been a pack-horse driver with the kafila, which Sir A. Burnes accompanied to Balkh. He was struck by the fuss my guide was making about me, and appeared to discover me. He joined us, and commenced talking of the 'Feringhees' and 'Sekundur Burnes.' He told me that officer had employed him to collect old coins at Balkh, and, praising his liberality, gave me several hints that he expected I would be equally so, and give him a present. But to all I turned a deaf ear, and would not be recognised, though I listened with all complacency to his stories, and chimed in with the usual explanations in his pauses, so that, as his acquaintance would give him no information, he finally took leave of us, evidently in much doubt as to the correctness of the surmise." A few days afterwards he was again suspected. A Kuzzilbash asked him whence he came—if from Lucknow. "I feared," said Pottinger, "he had been there, so said 'from near Shahjehanabad;' upon which he informed me that Lucknow was a very fine city, and the only place in India

1837. which the Feringhees had not taken ; that he had never been there himself, but knew a person who had. Seeing him pause for an answer, I replied that he, doubtless, was right ; that I myself had the honour of being acquainted with a Syud whose friend had been to Lucknow.”*

But a far more serious difficulty awaited him in Yakoob Beg's country. This man was a noted Hazareh chief, who was wont to levy black mail upon all travellers, and, if it suited his purpose, to sell them off into slavery. He was not a bad man, after his kind, but he was surrounded and influenced by a crew of unscrupulous ruffians, and Pottinger and his companions were for some time in danger of losing either their liberties or their lives. Detained for several days in Yakoob Beg's fort, the young English officer was rigorously examined, and was often at his wits' end to answer the questions that were put to him. Of the dangers and difficulties by which he was surrounded he has given an interesting account in his journal. “The chief,” he says, “was the finest Hazareh I had seen, and appeared a well-meaning, sensible person. He, however, was quite in the hands of his cousin, an ill-favoured, sullen, and treacherous-looking rascal. I, by way of covering my silence, and to avoid much questioning, took to my beads, and kept telling them with great perseverance, no doubt much to the increase of my reputation as a holy personage. Syud Ahmed did the same to cover his ignorance of the Sheeah forms. This turned the conversation on religious subjects, and I found that these people knew more than we gave them credit for, and though on abstruser points I could throw dust in their eyes, yet on the subject of every-day duties I was completely brought to a stand-still by my ignorance of the Sheeah faith, and fear lest I should, by mentioning Soonee rules, cause a discovery. Syud Ahmed was equally puzzled, and felt in full the false position I was in, and the want of a skilful and clever aid to take the brunt off my shoulders. Hoosain did all he could, but he was too distant to prompt me, and by several blunders, or rather inappropriate attempts of his to support me, I was regularly floored, and at last had to declare that I had not a proper knowledge of these things. I had been a

* These and all the following extracts are from the unpublished journals of Eldred Pottinger.

1837.

soldier and had not studied, but would do so now. The confusion I showed, and the ignorance of some of my answers, raised the suspicion of the chief's cousin, who, on one of the party asking if the Feringhees had not conquered all Hindostan, said: 'Why, he may be a Feringhee himself. I have always heard that the Hindostanees are black, and this man is fairer than we are.' I am sure we must all have shown signs of confusion at this. For my own part, I felt my cheeks tingle, and my presence of mind fast failing me, particularly as the whole assembly turned towards me. I had, however, no time for observation, and found I must say something for myself. Hoosain had at once commenced a vigorous denial, in which he was joined by the Caubul merchant; yet the chief, a shrewd fellow, paid no attention to them, and evidently appeared to think there was some truth in it; and the multitude, ever prone for the wonderful, were already talking of the Feringhee in no very complimentary terms, scarcely one paying attention to my defenders. I, therefore, addressing the chief, said that such inhospitality had never before been heard of; that here I had come as a pilgrim trusting to his aid; that I had chosen an unfrequented and barren road because inhabited by the Mussulmans, in preference to the easier road, as it is well known the Afghan people treat them well, and only tyrannise over the sect of Ali, the lawful Caliph; that in India there were Moguls, Pathans, and all sorts of people from cold climates; that, truly, much of it was hot, but that parts were cold to the north, and snow always lay on the mountains, and that if he asked my friends, they would tell him that I was a Kohistanee and a true believer. The chief appeared satisfied with this, and turned his attention to Syud Ahmed and the others, who were all talking together at the top of their voices; and the multitude, on finding me speak as others did, and that I had no monstrosity about me, as they doubtless fancied a Feringhee should have, had gradually turned their attention to those who made most noise; and I, having succeeded in satisfying the demand for an answer, was glad to be silent. My companions, however, carried their explanations too far, and the accuser, besides being obliged to make an apology, was taunted and badgered so much, that even a much less rancorous man would have

1837. been irritated and vowed vengeance, and seeing that my attempts to quiet them only added to his anger, I was obliged to hold my peace. It being now sunset, the chief got up and said, 'I'll not prevent you from saying your prayers; as soon as I have finished mine, I will return.' We immediately broke up, and set to performing the necessary ablutions, and then commenced prayers. I had no taste for this mockery, and not considering it proper, never before having attempted it, was rather afraid of observation. I fortunately, however, by the aid of Hoosain, got through properly, at least unremarked, and then had recourse to the beads till the rest had finished. Syud Ahmed, however, got into a scrape; the Caubulee detected him as a Soonee, but he was pacified on Hoosain acknowledging that the other was but a new convert going to Meshed for instruction."

Days passed; Pottinger and his companions were still detained; so they began to meditate flight. The operation, however, was a hazardous one, and it seemed better to wait a little longer, in the hope of receiving the chief's permission for their departure. Meanwhile, there was no little danger of the real character of the party being discovered, for their baggage was subjected to a search, and many of the articles in Pottinger's possession were such as, if rightly understood, clearly to divulge his European origin. Among these was a copy of Elphinstone's *Caubul*, which puzzled them greatly. "On the 6th," wrote Pottinger in his journal, "the chief had evidently an idle day—he came before breakfast, and afterwards coming a second time, examined our loads. There was a small tin can with medicines in it, which attracted his attention; but the danger of it was escaped by saying we were merely transporting it. The printed books were at first passed over, but, being unwatched, one of the meddlers hanging about took Elphinstone's *Caubul* up, and happened to open at a print. We were nearly floored at once, the whole party declaring it was an idol. Hoosain, however, swore that it was not, and that the houses of Kuzzilbashes in Caubul were full of such pictures. A small parcel of reeds next struck their attention, and they would not rest satisfied till opened, when they found some pencils and a pair of compasses, which I had tied there to preserve their points. They

1837.

were lost in astonishment, and when I said the compasses were for the study of astronomy, a pursuit which the Persian sect, for the purposes of astrology, pay much attention to, I was surprised to find it was in the Hazareh estimation a forbidden science. However, a few names and assertions got us over that. The hangers-on had, in the mean time, got hold of a note-book of mine, in which was a catalogue of generic terms in English, and the equivalents in Persian and Pushtoo. This puzzled them greatly, and the party being joined by a neighbouring chief, the brother-in-law of Meer Yakoob, and a Syud; both of whom could read, there was a general examination of the writing, and no explanation would satisfy them; at last, tired of guessing, they gave it up and retired. . . . The chief asked me how I would like to live with him, and on my replying that if in the summer I found it so cold, what would I do in the winter, he said, 'Such a delicate person as you would die in a week. It is only we' (pointing to his miserable half-starved clansmen) 'who can stand the cold.' The chief here made a slight mistake (from judging by himself, I suppose): he was certainly a well-fed, hearty-looking fellow, who could have stood or given a buffet with a right good will. As for the others, they were melancholy anatomies, apparently made but to prove in what misery, brutality, and ignorance the human kind can exist. The half-clothed barbarians of Southern Asia have an idea that all persons of fair complexion must be delicate, while we in general attribute delicacy to a dark skin. Their poor—from the want of clothing—expose their bodies to the vicissitudes of the weather, and it becomes tanned, and consequently they think it a mark of hardiness, while their wealthy and great, always covered and housed, retain, in a great measure, their lightness of colour. Hence it is considered the badge of delicacy and effeminacy."

His prospects were now anything but cheering. His companions were taken ill, and there seemed to be too much reason to apprehend that he would be detected and imprisoned. Another source of disquietude was the extreme dislike of his honest truthful nature to the imposture which he was compelled to act. "In the evening," so he wrote in his journal, "Hoosain was also taken ill with intermittent fever, and

1837.

Syud Ahmed fancied that he had a relapse. I was, therefore, more alone than usual, and at the time I should have avoided reflection ; but I was obliged to review the actions of the day, which had, indeed, followed so fast upon each other, that I had not a previous moment to consider the results. Now that I looked back, well knowing the imposition I had been practising, I could not conceal from myself the true state of the case, and that a discovery had really been made ; but that hitherto good fortune had saved us. For the barbarians were not certain in their own mind, though a grain more evidence or the speech of a bold man would probably have decided the affair. I also felt my total incompetency to meet them alone, from my inadequate knowledge of their language and customs ; and, as people in my situation generally do, I blackened my prospect a great deal more than it deserved." Thus he meditated for a while ; but he was a man naturally of a cheerful and sanguine nature, so he cast away unavailing anxieties, and fortified himself for the work before him. " At last," he continued, " finding that I could do nothing, I judged it better to join Hoosain's servant in an inroad on our provision-bag, which he was very vigorously undertaking, than pursue such bootless ruminations." And, indeed, as he said, his prospects were not so bad as they seemed ; for, on the following day, the morning of the 7th of August, the Hazareh chief yielded to the persuasions of the strangers and suffered them to depart in peace. They had scarcely, however, recommenced their march, when, to their dismay, they were summoned back again. What followed may best be told in Pottinger's own words. It must be premised that he had propitiated YakooB Beg by the gift of a detonator gun. " We, congratulating ourselves on getting off, were gladly climbing the rocky glen which led down to the castle, and had nearly reached the top of the mountains, when we were aware of several men running after us at speed and shouting for us to turn back. We had no choice left, so obeyed. I never saw such a change come over a party, particularly as the slave-dealers were let go, and we alone called back, the messengers specifying that the chief wanted me. I made up my mind that I was to be detained, and certainly was too annoyed for further talk ; it, however, struck me the chief

1837.

might want a turncrew or bullet-mould, and I left Syud Ahmed behind to unload the pony, and, if he could find them, send them after. For this purpose we halted opposite the strangers' hut, and left our cattle. Hoosain and I having made this arrangement, and charged the others to be cool, with as much unconcern as we could muster, proceeded on alone. We had got then within a few yards of the esplanade in front of the castle where the chief was, when we heard a shot, and then a shout of exultation. What this meant we could not make out; but whatever it was, it had the effect a good shout always has of raising my spirits, and I felt that it would have been a great relief to give so joyful a hurrah myself; but as I thought, we reached the open space, and a few yards took us within speaking distance of the chief, who, in answer to 'Peace be unto you,' replied, 'You may go now,—I don't want you; I only sent for you to make the gun go off, but it is gone off.' I turned to be off too, wishing him most devoutly a passage to Tartarus, but Hoosain had been too seriously frightened to let him go off so quietly, and burst out into so eloquent an oration that he perfectly delighted me, and astonished the Hazarehs. He asked the chief, among other things, 'Do you expect that we are to return from Herat, if you choose to send every time your gun misses fire?' He, in fact, quite overthrew the chief by his heat, and that worthy only appeared anxious to get out of reach of such a tongue."

Without much further adventure, the travellers reached Herat on the 18th of August, having been twenty-six days on the road, eight of which were days of detention. Soon after their arrival they narrowly escaped being carried off and sold into slavery. "On our first arrival," wrote Pottinger on the 20th of August, "we went about unarmed; but happening to go to the Musula, a building about eight hundred yards from the gate of Muluk, built by Gowhur Shah Begum, the wife of Shah Rook Sooltan, as an academy, without the walls, we were very nearly carried off by the people who live near it in a rendezvous for slaveholders. We were only saved by Syud Ahmed's presence of mind, who, on being questioned, said we had come with a party to a neighbouring garden to pass the day, and that our companions were coming

Arrival at
Herat.

1837.

after us. On this they went off, and we made the best of our way back to the city, with a firm resolution never again to venture out without our arms; and it is a rule every one should follow in these countries, unless attended by an armed escort. However, in any case, a sword should always be carried, if not by yourself, by an attendant. So universal and necessary is the custom, that the Moollahs always travel armed even with an army."

At this time, Shah Kamran, the reigning Prince of Herat, with his Wuzeer, Yar Mahomed, was absent from his capital, on a campaign in the still-disputed territory of Seistan. On the 17th of September they returned to Herat, and all the population of the place went forth to greet them. They had scarcely arrived, when news came that Mahomed Shah, the King of Persia, was making preparations for an advance on Herat; and soon it became obvious that the Heratees must gird themselves up to stand a siege. Yar Mahomed was a base, bad man; but he was not a weak one. He was a man-stealer, a slave-dealer of the worst type; a wretch altogether without a scruple of conscience or an instinct of humanity. But he was, after his kind, a wise statesman and a good soldier; and he threw himself into the defence of Herat with an amount of vigour and resolution worthy of a hero of a higher class. Shah Kamran was little more than a puppet in his hands. To this man, Pottinger, in the crisis which had arisen, deemed it right to make himself known. The fall of Herat would manifestly be an event injurious to British interests. He was an artillery officer, skilled in the use of ordnance, and knew something of the attack and defence of fortified cities, from the lessons of Straith and Bordwine. Might he not be of some use in this emergency? The first step to be taken was to make the acquaintance of Yar Mahomed. So he went to his quarters. "He received me," wrote Pottinger, "most graciously; rose on my entrance, and bade me be seated beside himself. He was seated in an alcove in the dressing-room of his bath. As it is not customary to go empty-handed before such people, I presented my detonating pistols, which were the only things I had worth giving. After this interview I went about everywhere boldly, and was very seldom recognised as a European. A few days afterwards, I

1837.

paid a visit, by desire, to the King." From this time, the disguise which had sat so unpleasantly upon him—which had, indeed, been a thorn in the flesh of his honesty and truthfulness—was abandoned. He was under the protection of the King and the Wuzeer, and, save by their authority, no man dared to molest him.

Eldred Pottinger was the least egotistical of men. He was provokingly reticent about himself in all the entries in his journal. In some men this might have been traced to caution; for his papers might have fallen into hands for which they were never intended. But, in him, it was simply the modesty of his nature. It is not to be gathered, from what he has written, in what manner the Wuzeer of Herat and the young English officer first became friends and allies, or what was the exact character of the relations established between them. Yar Mahomed was far too astute a man not to see clearly that the presence of an English officer in the besieged city might be turned to profitable account; whilst Pottinger, on his part, saw before him a grand opportunity of gratifying the strong desire which had glowed within him ever since he was a child. The Persians invested Herat, and his work began. It need not be said that the young artilleryman held no recognised position, either of a military or a political character. He was merely a volunteer. But there were Russian engineers in the Persian camp; and there was never, perhaps, a time when a little European skill and knowledge were more needed for the direction of the rude energies of an Oriental army. There was much in the mode of defence which excited Pottinger's contempt; much which also evoked his indignation. The following passage from his journal illustrates both the want of humanity and the want of wisdom they displayed: "I have not thought it necessary to recount the number of heads that were brought in daily, nor indeed do I know. I never could speak of this barbarous, disgusting, and inhuman conduct with any temper. The number, however, was always in these sorties insignificant, and the collecting them invariably broke the vigour of the pursuit, and prevented the destruction of the trenches. There is no doubt that great terror was inspired by the mutilation of the bodies, amongst their comrades; but there must have been, at least, equal in-

Defence of
Herat.

1837. dignation, and a corresponding exultation was felt by the victors at the sight of these barbarous trophies and the spoils brought in. From the latter, great benefit was derived, as it induced many to go out who otherwise never would have gone out willingly; great benefit was derived from the arms and tools brought in on these occasions; but though the Afghan chiefs fully acknowledged and felt the value of proper combination for this purpose, they were too irregular to carry through any arrangement. It always appeared to me desirable that every sortie should consist of three distinct bodies: one of unencumbered light troops to break in on and chase off the attackers, the second body to be kept together as a reserve to support the first in case of a check, but not to follow them farther than to a position sufficiently advanced to cover the third party, which should be armed with strong swords or axes, and be ordered to destroy the works and carry off as many tools or arms as possible on the return of the sortie. If successful, the prize property should be equally divided and given to the men on the spot. It is worthy of remark, that all the sorties were made with swords alone, and that, though many slight wounds were given, very few men were killed outright; and that the Afghans, having apparently exhausted the stimulus that carried them on at first, or wanting confidence in their weapons, never once attempted to meet the Persian reserves, the first shot from which was invariably the signal for a general retreat."

Affairs were obviously now in a bad way; and, three days before Christmas, Yar Mahomed, not knowing what to do, sought the young English officer's advice. "Mirza Ibrahim," wrote Pottinger in his journal, "the Wuzeer's private secretary (I may call him), came to talk quietly over our prospects. I suggested that some one should be sent to the Persian camp to sound the chiefs, and I would go with him; and he told me no Afghan would venture, and that no Sheeah would be trusted; but he would see what the Wuzeer said. It was our idea at this time that the city must eventually fall. All hopes of diversion until the equinox had failed. For my own part, I could not understand what kept the Persians back. They had an open breach, and no obstacle which would have checked British troops for a single moment. The Afghans

were badly armed, and their fire of small-arms could easily have been kept down, while the scattered and desultory exertions of a few swordsmen against a column could have availed little. The Persians, however, had begun scientifically, and in their wisdom did not comprehend what was to be done when the enemy held out after they had established themselves on the counterscarp. Their practice under our officers did not go further, and in this unheard-of case they were at a loss, and the European officers still with them did not appear to have influence enough or skill enough to direct the attacks further."

1837.

The new year found the siege still dragging wearily on, and the Afghans within the walls wondering how it happened that they continued to hold out. Not expecting, however, that this state of things could last much longer, the Shah and his Minister again bethought themselves of sending Pottinger as a negotiator into the Persian camp. On the 19th of January, the young English officer had a lengthy interview with Kamran, in the course of which the King instructed Pottinger with respect to the language—strange language, half entreaty and half threat—which it was desirable to address to the Persian monarch. But a day or two afterwards the King withdrew his sanction to the proposed negotiation, and it was not until the end of the first week of February that Pottinger set forth on his mission. The story is thus told by himself: "On the 8th of February I went into the Persian camp. I took leave of the Wuzeer in the public bath of the city. He was in company with the Arz-Begy, Ata Mahomed Khan, the Topshee-Bashee, Nujeeb Allah Khan, and his private Mirza (*i. e.* secretary), sitting at breakfast on the floor of the bath. Not one of the party had a rag of clothing on him except a cloth round their waists, while their servants, officers, and messengers from the ramparts stood round armed to the teeth. At the same time the temperature of the Humman was so hot that I burst into a profuse sweat on entering, and it was so overpowering that I would not sit down or join in their meal, but hurried off as quickly as I could. The Wuzeer begged me to tell Hadjee Aghasy, the Persian Wuzeer, 'that ever since he had been honoured by the title of son, and the Hadjee had assumed that of his father,

1838.

1838.

he had been most desirous of showing his filial affection, and had endeavoured to do so, but the Hadjee, in a most unpaternal manner, had brought the Shah-in-Shah with an army to besiege Herat, and he, by his salt, was bound to stand by his old master; if, however, they would return to Persia, he would follow and show his obedience as a son to the Hadjee and a servant to the Shah-in-Shah; and further, whatever might be his own wish, the Afghans would never surrender, nor dare he propose such a thing to them. That they had heard of the bad treatment the Afghans who had joined Mahomed Shah met with, and that they and he were all frightened by that from joining his Persian Majesty.' I then left the city by the gate of Kootob Chak, accompanied by a small party, who went with me to within musket-shot of the village of Baharan, on the west of the town, which the Persian picquets occupy at night. Having left the Afghans, who stood watching my progress and shouting their good wishes, I pursued my way, accompanied by Syud Ahmud, to the Kasid, whom I had mounted on a baggage-pony. The village was unoccupied, and we had to push on through twisting narrow lanes, bounded by high mud walls, and I every moment expected a bullet from some sentinel, as we were approaching in a manner calculated to excite suspicion. The Afghan and Persian plunderers having frequent skirmishes amongst these gardens, all the walls had breaches made so as to favour the approach or retreat of men on foot passing these gaps. I kept a good look-out, and fortunately I did so, as through one I observed the Persians running to occupy the road we were following. I therefore stopped, and made Syud Ahmud wave his turban, for want of a better flag of truce. The Persians, on this, came towards us in a most irregular manner, so much so, that if twenty horsemen had been there, the whole picquet might have been cut off. Some were loading as they ran, and one valiant hero, who came up in the rear, after he had ascertained who we were—to prevent danger, I suppose—loaded his musket and fixed his bayonet. They were a most ragged-looking set, and from their dress and want of beard looked inferior to the Afghans. They were delighted at my coming, and the English appeared great favourites with

1838.

them. A fancy got abroad that I was come with proposals to surrender, and made the great majority lose all command of themselves at the prospect of revisiting their country so soon. They crowded round, some patting my legs and others my horse, while those who were not successful in getting near enough, contented themselves with Ahmud Shah and the Kasid, the whole, however, shouting: 'Afreen! Afreen! Khoosh Amudyd; Anglish humisheh Dostani Shah-in-Shah!' —'Bravo! Bravo! Welcome. The English were always friends of the King of Kings!' The officer who commanded the picquet was a Major. He had been under Major Hart, and knew all the English in Persia, and when Yar Mahomed was a prisoner in Mushud he had been in charge of him, so we were soon friends. He told me he had charge of this post during the day, but that at night he went to the trenches, and that two hundred men were sent to this point to relieve him; he invited me into his quarters, which were in a hówze (covered reservoir); the basin had been filled up, and it now made a very nice guard-room. I told this man that I had a message for Mahomed Shah from Kamran Shah, and he apologised for having to delay me, saying, that as I was a soldier I must be aware that discipline required I should first be taken to the Major-General commanding the attack; moreover, I learnt he belonged to the Russian regiment, and that I was to be taken before Samson Khan. We only stopped in the Yavur's (Major's) quarters till a kallyan was produced, and as I did not smoke, the others were hurried over their pleasure, and we resumed our way to General Samson's quarters; the way lay through gardens and vineyards, in which not even the roots of the trees or shrubs were left. Samson received me very civilly, taking me for an Afghan, and was a good deal surprised at finding I was a European. He sent for tea and kallyans, and after partaking of the tea, sent me on to camp in charge of the Yavur. News of my arrival had reached the camp before I did; who or what I was no one knew, but the report went abroad that I was the Moojhtehed of Herat (a title only used by Sheeahs, and, therefore, quite out of place with regard to Herat), and that I had brought the submission of Kamran to Mahomed Shah's

1838.

terms; the whole of the camp, therefore, crowded to meet us. As we advanced, the crowd got denser, and in the main street of the camp we would have been stopped by the pressure if the escort had not taken their iron ramrods and laid about them, by aid of which discipline we reached the tents of Hadjee Aghasy, the Persian Wuzeer. I was received with considerable civility as an envoy from the town, and after the usual salutations the Hadjee asked my business. I told him I was an English traveller, that H.M. Shah Kamran had sent me with a message to Mahomed Shah, that Wuzeer Yar Mahomed Khan had charged me with a message to his Excellency, and that I had brought letters from the Government of India for Colonel Stoddart, which had been brought into the town, and the Afghan Government had permitted me to take to Colonel Stoddart. I further said I wished to see Colonel Stoddart immediately, as I believed the letters were of importance. To this he assented, and said that with regard to the message for the King he would request orders. I then proceeded to Colonel Stoddart's tent, who I found in the greatest astonishment possible, as his servants, taking up the general report of my rank, had announced me as the Moojhtehed of Herat. He had been undressed, and pulling on his coat to do honour to the high dignitary, gave me time to enter his tent before he could get out, so we met at the door, where he overwhelmed me with a most affectionate Persian welcome, to which I, to his great surprise, replied in English. No one who has not experienced it can understand the pleasure which countrymen enjoy when they thus meet, particularly when of the same profession and pursuing the same object. We had hardly got rid of the crowd who accompanied me, and got seated, when one of Hadjee Aghasy's servants arrived and summoned me. He was rather impertinent, interrupting our conversation to hasten us, and as he paid no attention to my answers that I would pay the Hadjee a visit as soon as I had drunk my coffee, it became necessary to tell him plainly the longer he stayed the more delay would occur, as I should not make any preparation to move while the tent was occupied by strangers. He was, therefore, obliged to leave. I was anxious to delay my visit as long as

1838.

possible, as I fancied the Hadjee, who is a keen debater, would enter into long arguments in no way connected with the points at issue, and I was anxious to make the most of my time and see how the tide of politics was running. It must be recollected that I was an Afghan emissary, and had nothing to do with British politics. I had calculated on the Persians making this a plea to prevent my communicating with Colonel Stoddart, and had, therefore, brought the Kasid (courier) to ensure the letters reaching him, but my unexpected appearance and language had taken Hadjee Aghasy by surprise, and he unthinkingly allowed me to go where I was nearly a free agent. When I was ready, Colonel Stoddart accompanied me to the Hadjee's tents. After we were seated, and the usual compliments passed, the Hadjee asked me to tell him my message to the King of Kings from Prince Kamran, and his own one from Yar Mahomed. I replied that the message from the Afghan King was to the Persian King, and I could not deliver it to any one else; that regarding his own message, probably a smaller number of auditors would be desirable. Assenting to this, he ordered the tent to be cleared. One young man sat a little longer than the rest, evidently wishing to remain. The Hadjee, who was apparently excessively bilious and out of temper, no sooner saw this than he attacked him with abuse, and his breath being expended without satisfying his rage, he, no longer able to speak, spat after the offender, who slunk out of the tent pale and frightened with the storm he had witlessly raised. The Hadjee, a small thin man, twisted himself into a thousand contortions, and anything but dignified. I delivered my message, and though we talked until past four o'clock on the subject, we did not get any nearer an agreement. The Hadjee would not listen to the Afghan proposals, as might have been and was expected, nor would his proposal have suited the Afghans. During the visit he called for our last map to prove that the British allowed Herat to be a Persian province. Burnes's map was in consequence produced (with the names of places written on it in Persian); it, however, proved the Hadjee wrong. He was very indignant at this, and said the British Government had never told him, and asked Colonel Stoddart

1838.

(who, when the tent was cleared, had been asked to stay) why he had not heard. Colonel Stoddart replied that he had no instructions which would explain the point, but he would refer the case to the Envoy at Teheran ; however, he was not himself aware the British Government had ever received official information from the Persian Government of Herat being annexed to that State, while a branch of the Sudozay monarchy, which family the British Government had acknowledged (in conjunction with Futteh Ali Shah) as sovereign in Afghanistan, still held possession of and claimed it. The Hadjee told both Colonel Stoddart and myself, on going away, that Mahomed Shah would send for us *both* in a few minutes. We had scarcely got back to Colonel Stoddart's tent when the Shah's messenger arrived. We accompanied him across the esplanade ; in front of the King's tents a large working party was employed in carving stone shells out of the grave-stones, which they appeared tolerably expert at. Around the Shah's tents was the usual serai-purdah, or screen, about eight feet high, of red canvas. We entered by a narrow door, and found the Shah seated almost immediately opposite us in an European arm-chair, under the fly of a large double-poled tent. He was plainly dressed in a shawl vest, with the black Persian cap on his head. His personal servants stood at the opposite end of the diagonal of the tent, with heads bent and arms folded. The Shah heard Kamran's message, and replied to it by stating his complaints against Herat, and added, he was determined to take it. He never would be satisfied till he had a garrison in the citadel. At first he spoke with much dignity, and he made the most of the just grounds of complaint which he had. Finally, however, he talked himself into a passion, and said Kamran was a treacherous liar. After an audience of half or three-quarters of an hour, we were given permission to leave. In the evening a tremendous storm set in, attended with sleet and rain ; this continued all night. In the morning of the 9th it still continued ; about noon the sleet and rain changed to snow, and it continued till dark, when the clouds broke, and it began to freeze hard, which continued all night, and next day, the 10th. The bad weather on the 9th prevented my return to the city,

so, after breakfast on the 10th, I mounted, and riding out by the flank of the Persian line, I returned to the city, the gate I came out at, and so avoided the points where hostilities were going on. On my coming back the whole town was in a ferment. What they had expected I do not pretend to know, but from the instant I entered the gate I was surrounded by messengers requesting information. I, however, referred them all to the Wuzeer, and went there myself. After a short interview, I was summoned by a messenger from the Shah. His Majesty having seen my return with his glass, was awaiting my arrival, anxious to hear Mahomed Shah's message. When he had heard it, he replied by a gasconading speech, in which he abused every one. During the storm on the 9th the Afghans mustered to sortie, trusting the inclemency of the weather would make success rest on cold steel. However, on account of my being in the camp they gave up their intention. It was a great pity, as a powerful sortie at this period of the siege would have had a great effect on the after negotiations which took place, while the Persians had an idea the Afghans were much reduced."

So negotiation having failed, the siege went on, but with very little result on the one side or the other. Although Mahomed Shah had used such high language, he was really well inclined to come to terms, and he thought it expedient that it should be known in Herat that if the Heratees would admit his rights of sovereignty, he would hold them in abeyance, and abandon the idea of planting a Persian garrison in the place. Above all things, he wished them to get rid of the Englishman, and in future to negotiate for themselves. Only a few days had elapsed, therefore, before a Persian envoy appeared in Herat. The incident is thus narrated by Pottinger in his Journal: "On the 12th, the Persian officer whom I first met, Yavur Agha Jan, was sent in by the Persians to try and talk the Afghans over. He had instructions to represent how much better it would be for them to settle their differences between themselves than call in the infidels; the man was also instructed to say that warning should be taken from our conduct in India, where we had pretended friendship and trade to cover our ambition, and, finally, by such deceit, had

1838.

mastered all India. The Yavur was taken up into the citadel and prevented from communicating with any one of the eunuchs, either Hadjee Firoz Khan or Wuly Khan being always with him. The Persian fire did not in the least diminish on account of their envoy. Indeed, it could scarcely have done so without stopping altogether. In the evening we had another snow-storm, which lasted all night. In the morning (February 13th) the whole country was covered: but at sunrise a thaw commenced, accompanied by sleet, which finally changed to rain, that lasted till three in the afternoon, when it cleared up, and the garrison sent out the Yavur with promises calculated to deceive, but stipulating that, as the Persians were the stronger, they should retire a short distance, as a proof that they really intended peace. . . . The Yavur confidently assured the Afghan chiefs that Mahomed Shah had no wish to interfere in the internal affairs of their country; he wanted them to supply his armies with soldiers as they had done Nadir; his aim in the present expedition was not Herat, but India; that it behoved them as Mahomedans to support the Persian King; that he would pay them liberally, and lead them to the plunder of India and Toorkistan.*

It happened, however, that nothing came of these overtures. There was mutual distrust. The Afghans especially declared that they had no faith in the Persians, but that if the latter would place their affairs in the hands of Colonel Stoddart, the Heratees would delegate the power of peace-

* Under this date (February 13), Pottinger records that he obtained some money on the preceding day from a merchant, in a manner very honourable to the British character. "As I was sending off a cossid last night," he wrote, "a Candahary trader, whom I had never before seen, came and requested me to give him an order on Candahar, offering to pay me gold here. Being in want of money I accepted his offer, and gave him a note to Major Leech, of the Bombay Engineers, an old acquaintance of mine, requesting him to pay the amount, explaining to the man that I was not certain if Major Leech were in Candahar or not, and if not, he must follow him. Though the

man couldn't understand a word of English, and no one but myself in Herat could read the note, he implicitly trusted me, for he had learned from the Hindoos and others that I was an English officer. I found a great change in my position for the better when it became known that I was in the British service, and not an impostor personating a European; for in general the genus Feringhee is expected to wear a cocked-hat, tight pantaloons, and a feather. There are other distinguishing marks also fancied, but they are not agreed to by all, while the above three, as far as I could discover, are universally allowed; I therefore mention them alone."

1838.

making to Pottinger, and so a satisfactory issue might be attained. Meanwhile, the siege was continued, with no very material results; and the young English officer was constantly present on the works, advising the Wuzeer or other leading chiefs, and assisting them as much by his resolute example as by his professional skill.

But he did not disguise from himself that his position was one of much difficulty and delicacy, and he doubted sometimes not only whether, as an officer of a Government which, at that time, was a neutral power, he ought to take an active part in the defence, but also whether his presence at Herat might not really be prejudicial to the Afghans. "It might be alleged," he wrote, "from my having a commission in the Indian Army, that I was a secret agent for Government, whereas I was a free agent, Government having most liberally given me a *carte blanche* as to leave and action, in return for which I offered to lay before it my acquisitions in geography and statistics; and I was very apprehensive that my actions might be disapproved of, and I should not have remained in Herat but for the pressing invitations of the Herat Government, which used the argument so persuasive amongst themselves, viz. 'that a guest should not leave his host at the approach of danger, but help him through it, so as to congratulate him at the end on his escape.' " Moreover, he felt that his Afghan friends were not altogether free from suspicion that his presence at Herat might not be quite accidental, and that the English had a covert design to possess themselves of the Afghan country. One passage in Pottinger's journal, which bears upon this subject, is worth quoting, for it shows the mixed feelings with which at that time the anticipated interference of the English in the affairs of Afghanistan was regarded: "On the 15th (of April) I was invited, in walking through the works, to stop in an Afghan officer's quarters. He fancied the English wished to take Afghanistan preparatory to attacking Persia and Russia, and his gasconading as to what the Afghans' prowess would be when they were employed by us was quite overpowering. With a great deal of trouble, I explained to him that the English had no wish to extend their frontier; they merely wished to

1838.

be let alone, and instead of wanting the Afghans to plunder and attack their neighbours, they wanted them to stay quietly at home and eat the produce of their own fields. After considering a little, my acquaintance replied that it was very fine and proper, but an impossibility, 'for we won't let each other do so. No Afghan in power will elbow another out of power to possess wealth, lest it be used to remove him from his situation; and all the Alekozyes here have merely come from necessity. We were turned off our land at Candahar by the Barukzyes. We have there of hereditary lands quite sufficient to make us wealthy and influential; if we could get them back we would return to-morrow, and until we can we must live here by plundering others.' I suggested that if the British Government interfered it would of course endeavour to bring about a settlement of these claims, though such matters, being of an internal nature, it did not appear proper a foreign Government should interfere. He interrupted me testily, saying: 'What is the use of talking? If you interfere in one point, you must in all, for no one will act till you do, and it is nonsense talking of advice and persuasion. Your Vakeels and Elchees will and can do nothing with us till you frighten us. March ten or fifteen regiments to Kelat, and then tell the Sirdars what you want done and they will obey implicitly; till then, no one will fear you.'"

But there were times, also, when the young English officer was necessitated to defend his country from the imputation of weakness and insignificance in comparison with the power of other European States. It falls to the lot of all our isolated countrymen in remote Eastern regions to be called upon to disabuse men's minds of strangely erroneous impressions of the geography and the politics of the Western world; and the entries in their journals which relate to these explanations are not among the least interesting of such records. How Eldred Pottinger combated the ignorance of his Afghan friends may be gathered from the following: "On the 16th the Persians fired from the two-gun battery at the gate of Kooshk all day, and damaged the parapets about the gate a good deal. A small party assembled at Sooltan Khan's post, opposite the Karadaghy attack, to see the firing. The conver-

sation turned upon Europe. Sooltan Khan is a very inquisitive, sharp person for his rank, and knows more than Asiatics generally do regarding Europe. He had been reading of Napoleon, and had heard from the Persians that the Russians had defeated him, and conquered all Europe but England. After a good deal of trouble, I succeeded in making my auditors understand that Napoleon had been Emperor of the French nation ; that that nation had been tyrannised over by its sovereigns until they rose up and overturned the monarchy ; that great disturbances and excesses had taken place, and that the whole of Europe had combined to check the people and restore the monarchy ; that in the ensuing war Napoleon's talents had saved his country as Nadir did Persia ; and, finally, in the same manner, he had been chosen Emperor, and had beaten the whole of Europe but England, which had only been saved by the impossibility of getting to it, our ships having swept the ocean, and completely prevented an enemy approaching our shores ; that the war had thus raged for many years, and Napoleon, being displeased with the Emperor of Russia, resolved to dethrone him, in pursuance of which he marched the greatest part of his army into Russia, but the Russians, having burnt the capital with all its stores, left the French monarch, at the beginning of winter, under the necessity of retracing his steps or starving, and that in the bitter cold of the Russian winter his army had perished. The other European nations, as soon as they found the French army destroyed, rose up and attacked the Emperor, and he was obliged to succumb to the universal combination, particularly as many in France itself opposed him. That so far from France being a province of Russia, it was a far more powerful Government, and had a much larger and more effective army than any European nation whatever. In the numerous disputes and conversations I had with well-informed natives, I always made it a rule to give them as much information as I possessed myself, and I studiously avoided any attempts to underrate the power of any nations in opposition to the English. When such attempts were made as regards England by the Europeans in the service of Persia and others, and the natives requested me to answer them, or

1838. taunted me for not replying, I generally contented myself by remarking that if England were so powerless and insignificant as represented, it was curious that people should take so much trouble to decry its power, in comparison with the powerful states mentioned; that every one thought the best of his own country, and results were all that could be judged by.”*

The monotony of the siege was now and then broken by some exciting incidents, which Pottinger has detailed in his diary with the unadorned accuracy of a soldier's pen. The following may be taken as a fair sample of the whole, and it derives an additional interest from the fact that it exhibits the danger to which the young Englishman, ever in the front, was continually exposed: “April 18. The Wuzeer ordered the Afghans to cease firing, and sit down under cover; they, however, though beaten with the musketry, drew their swords, brandished them above their heads, shouting to the Persians to come on. As might have been expected in such a storm of musket-balls, this bravado caused several casualties. Several men received bullets through the hands and arms. One fellow, more foolhardy than the rest, kept brandishing his huge Afghan knife, after the others had complied with repeated orders to sheathe their weapons, and had the knife destroyed by a bullet, which struck it just above his hand. I had gone down to the spot to see the mine sprung, and was sitting on the banquette with the Wuzeer and a party of chiefs, who, while he was preparing, were bantering the man whose knife was broken, and who came to beg a sword

* Another sample of this kind of conversation may be given in a note: “He” (a Persian messenger) “amused me much by the manner in which he dilated on the immense extent of Russia, and the number of its arms, which he contrasted with England. After a more than usually high-flown description of Russia, he turned to me and said: ‘You know that in comparison with Russia there is no use speaking of England. It is only forty parsangs wide, and sixty parsangs long (*i.e.* one hundred and sixty miles, and two hundred and forty); it has got no army; all its wealth is derived from shopkeeping; and it keeps its position by paying money to other Governments.’

I did not reply till the worthy's volubility ran him out of breath, when I remarked that the size of England or the number of its armies were of but little consequence, whether it had ten soldiers or ten lakhs was immaterial, for every one knew that no State in the world ever attempted any act of importance in opposition to England, and that only a few years ago the disapproval of the English Government, when mentioned to the Russian Government, had been sufficient to stop the march of the Russian army on Teheran, and to preserve the King of Kings from becoming a vassal of that empire.”

1838.

instead, when a bullet came in through a loophole over my head, and smashing a brick used for stopping it, lodged in Aga Ruhya's lungs, who was standing opposite, one of the splinters of the brick at the same time wounding him in the face. The poor fellow was a eunuch of Yar Mahomed's, and was always to be seen wherever any danger was; he died in two or three days. I had been but the moment before looking through the clods on the top of the parapet, with my breast resting against the loophole, watching the Persians, who were trying to establish themselves in the crater of the mine, and the Afghans in the counterscarp, who were trying to grapple the gabions and overset them, so that the scene was very interesting, and I had not sat down with the chiefs until Dyn Mahomed Khan actually pulled me down by my cloak, to listen to the jokes passed on the man who had his knife destroyed, and thus I escaped Aga Ruhya's bullet."

And here the story of this memorable siege enters another phase, and new interests are awakened. The English Minister at the Persian Court, accompanied by Major D'Arcy Todd, an officer of the Bengal Artillery, of whom some account appears in this volume, was now in the camp of the besiegers; and it was soon manifest that negotiations would be reopened for an amicable adjustment of the differences between Persia and Herat. On the evening of the very day on which Eldred Pottinger had thus narrowly escaped death, news came that D'Arcy Todd was seeking admittance within the works. "In the evening," wrote Pottinger, "the Persians at No. 2 attack announced that an Englishman wanted to come in. The Afghans received the announcement with peals of abuse, fancying it was some of the Europeans in the Persian service. After a great deal of trouble a Persian note was sent in, saying that Major Todd, the Naib of the English Ambassador, had arrived in the Persian trenches, and wanted entrance, and begged the person who might receive the note to inform Yar Mahomed Khan. As soon as the Wuzeer received the note he sent it to me, and I immediately joined him. The greater number of chiefs were assembled in the upper fausse-braie of the west side near the breach. On my arrival I was much disappointed at not seeing any European, as I fully expected to have met Major Todd. The Wuzeer,

1838.

making room for me on the charpoy where he was sitting, laughingly remarked: 'Don't be angry; I have thrown ashes on it, and blackened its face myself.' I begged for an explanation, and learned that he had sent back word that the Afghans neither wanted the Turks, the Russians, nor the English to interfere; they trusted to their swords, and at that hour of the evening they wouldn't let the Shah-in-Shah in himself; moreover, at that point no person should enter; but if the English Naib would go in the morning to the south-east angle he would be let in. I was much annoyed, and told him he had probably prevented the English Ambassador interfering, and he excused himself by saying that he acted so to make the Persians think he was not solicitous for the English to interfere."

This, however, was mere gasconading, for which the Afghans of Herat had an unquestionable genius: and on the following day the British emissary was received with all honour. Pottinger's account of his reception is interesting: "I was sitting with the Wuzer in Hadjee Firoz Khan's mosque, in the citadel, when the head [of a Persian] was brought up and the report made of the fight, and as it was the point that Major Todd had been directed to enter by, I feared they would not let him in, so went down myself, and just arrived in time, as the Afghans told him to keep away till the evening. The fact was, the explosion of the mine had cut off the retreat of several of the Persian miners without destroying the place they were in. The Afghans were, therefore, digging away on one side to make prisoners of them, and the Persians were doing so on the other side to release their comrades, they themselves working hard for the same purpose. My arrival was most opportune to persuade the Afghans, who thereon ceased firing, and all hostilities above ground, but nothing would induce the miners to be quiet; their blood was up, and digging, they insisted, was not fighting, so the point had to be yielded; and as soon as I ascertained that it was really Major Todd, he was told to come in. Futteh Mahomed Khan, who was an old acquaintance of Major Todd's, invited him into the tent, and had tea made, according to custom. He detained us till the *fausse-braie* was filled up by a strong body of men, who were thrown in for the

1838.

edification of a Persian who accompanied Major Todd. Without this, the crowding of the inhabitants of the town to see the Feringhee was sufficient to have astonished any person. Major Todd was, I fancy, the first European who ever appeared in costume in Herat, and the cocked-hat, epaulets, &c. &c., caused great admiration. In narrow streets a small number of persons appears very great, so the crowd to-day appeared tremendous, particularly as the inhabitants of the houses along the line of streets followed were mounted on the roofs to see the procession. Major Todd was sent in by the British Minister to offer the mediation of the British Government between Persia and Herat, and to announce that Mahomed Shah having requested this interference, Shah Kamran's consent was all he now required. Shah Kamran was delighted with the offer, and told Major Todd to request the British Envoy to act as his plenipotentiary, and whatever arrangement was decided on by him the Herat Government would sanction; moreover, he begged Sir John M'Neill would come into the city and talk affairs over with him. After Major Todd left the presence of the Shah, his Majesty took off his cloak, and sent it by Yar Mahomed Khan to Major Todd—a mark of the highest consideration in the Afghan territories, and one but seldom paid. A horse was also given; but Major Todd was as anxious not to accept presents as the Afghans were to make them, so he would not wait for the horse, notwithstanding they set about cutting away the parapet of the *fausse-braie*, and making a ramp up the counterscarp to get the nag out."

On the same evening—sooner, indeed, than the most sanguine had dared to expect—Sir John M'Neill sought admittance into the beleaguered city. There had been a meeting of chiefs, which Pottinger had attended, and the discussions had been of a more than commonly warlike character, when tidings arrived that the British Minister was coming. "The assembly," wrote Pottinger, "had just broken up, when a man came in to say that the British Minister had arrived at the edge of the ditch and wanted entrance. The man was not sent, and had only heard the report, and ran on to be the first with good news. As he could not give any intelligence we disbelieved him, and were composing ourselves to sleep,

1838.

when the real messenger arrived, with notes from his Excellency for Yar Mahomed and myself. I immediately went down to the south-west angle, while Yar Mahomed sent to collect some chiefs to receive the guest with proper honour. On reaching Futteh Mahomed Khan's post, I found Sir John M'Neill had just entered the *fausse-braie*. The chief, who was Kamran's ambassador to Teheran, knew Sir John, and having received much kindness from him, no sooner heard of his Excellency's arrival than he went and brought him into the fortifications, so almost the first person met at the post was the Envoy. After sitting a short time with Futteh Khan we proceeded to the city. We met Dyn Mahomed Khan on the way to Futteh Khan's post to welcome the Envoy, and, accompanied by him, proceeded to the gate of the citadel, where Yar Mahomed met us, and, after embracing the Envoy, led him to his quarters. Here the greater part of the night was spent in discussing the Persian and Afghan propositions; after which Sir John M'Neill accompanied me to my quarters. When I lay down the day had dawned, and I was a good deal surprised on awaking at half-past six to see the Envoy already up and busy writing. At seven, according to engagement, I sent to let the Wuzeer know that his Excellency was ready to receive him. Yar Mahomed was asleep when the message arrived, but they awoke him, and he joined us in a short time with a whole posse of chiefs. On my meeting him at the door, he asked me was it customary for our Ministers not to sleep at night, declaring that he had scarcely closed his eyes when he was told Sir John M'Neill was waiting for him; and further remarked: 'I do not wonder your affairs prosper, when men of such high rank as your Minister Plenipotentiary work harder than an Afghan private soldier would do even under the eye of the Shah.' Yar Mahomed brought a message to Sir John from Shah Kamran inviting him to an interview, and his Excellency immediately proceeded to the citadel, where he had a long interview with his Majesty, who placed everything at his disposal, and promised to agree to everything he decided on, and gave him the fullest powers to negotiate with the Persians. After the interview, the British Minister was requested to partake of the Afghan hospitality, and in the afternoon his

1838.

Excellency left the city and the armistice ceased. The breaches being open and practicable, and the garrison making no efforts to stop them, the Persian fire was not resumed, and everything remained quiet." Yar Mahomed was a shrewd man though a bad one, but he seldom said a shrewder thing than that set down in the above extract from Pottinger. Truly is it no wonder that our affairs prosper, when men of the highest rank, far away from the eye of their sovereign, work as hard as a common soldier in the presence of the Shah. It is by conscientious laboriousness of this kind—this duty-doing for duty's sake, so little understood by Asiatics, that we owe our prodigious successes in the East.

But this visit of the British Minister was of no avail. All our efforts at negotiation, breaking down under the characteristic insincerity of the Persians,* failed; and the siege dragged wearily on—all through the months of April and May and June. Now and then a new interest was awakened by pretences of Russian mediation, which were productive of no results. The language, at least, of Yar Mahomed in this case was dignified and becoming. He said that if the first offer of mediation had come from the Russians it might have been accepted by Herat, but that having admitted the arbitration of the British Ambassador, it would not be right that he should turn to the representatives of another country.

It would demand the space of a volume to narrate in detail the incidents of this protracted siege. Throughout many long months, the young English artilleryman was the life and soul of the defence. But there were many great advantages on the side of the Persians, and at last, towards the end of June, the Heratees were almost at their last gasp. Yar Mahomed was beginning to despond, and his followers were almost in a state of prostration. Food was scarce; money was scarce. There was a lack of everything, but of the stubborn courage which continued to animate and sustain the solitary Englishman. On the 25th of June, the Persians made a desperate attempt to carry the place by assault; but Yar Mahomed was incredulous of danger. "The Wuzeer," wrote Pottinger in his journal, "would not take warning,

* Compare with this statement the opinions expressed by Major Todd, *post*, page 240.

1838.

remaining quietly at his quarters, which deceived the garrison, and made many think that the signs of the assault were illusory. Indeed, most of the men had gone to sleep, when suddenly the report of two or three guns and the whiz of a rocket in the air was heard. The enemy immediately opened a heavy fire, but the musketry was feeble: it gradually, however, became more sustained, and the roar of the cannon on all sides was continued. The Wuzeer, on the first alarm, repaired to the gate of Mulick with a small body of men as a sort of reserve." He soon found that the peril was imminent; and then "the Wuzeer mounted and went by the gate of Kandahar to the Fausse-braie, sending orders for different chiefs to go to the aid of those on the summit of the breach. In spite of all advice, and even entreaty, his own party was allowed to struggle on in advance, and he arrived nearly alone. Sooltan Mahomed Khan at the same time arrived on the rampart to his brother's assistance, and gave him most opportune aid. The Wuzeer and his party, arriving at the traverses about a third of the way from the end of the upper Fausse-braie, found the men retreating by twos and threes, and others going off with the wounded: these were stopped. The Wuzeer, however, was alarmed. At first, he sat down about half way, whence, after some trouble, those about him insisted on his going on or sending his son. He chose the former, and sent the latter to the gate of Kandahar to stop stragglers and skulkers and attend to orders. The Wuzeer himself then went on past two traverses, to the last one held by the garrison; but on finding the men at a stand-still and insensible to his orders or entreaties to fight, he turned back to go for aid. The moment he turned, the men began to give way. He made his way to the first place he had sat down at. There, by showing him the men retreating and the evident ruin that must follow, he became persuaded to stop. Then they succeeded in bringing him back to the first traverse, which having but a narrow passage, his people and those about could turn back those who were coward-like retreating. From this he sent for aid; but foolishly, in spite of all advice, again allowed the men to go on by twos and three, so that they did nothing. At last, a Sooltan arrived with about fifty men, when, on a short

1838.

consultation, it was resolved to send him down into the lower Fausse-braie, to push along, that while those on the rampart were ordered to attempt an attack down the breach, those on the Fausse-braies on the east side should push on the other flank of the Persian column. Pursuant to this, Yar Mahomed, after much entreaty and even abuse, advanced the third time, and finally ventured past the last traverse, where, seeing the men inactive, he seized on a large staff, and rushing on the hindmost, by dint of blows he drove on the reluctant. Some, crowding up in narrow parts, seeing no escape, wildly jumped over the parapet and ran down the exterior slope, and some straight forward; the people on the other side making their rush at the same time. The Persians were seized with a sudden panic; abandoning their position they fled outright down the exterior slope and out of the lower Fausse-braie; after which the business ceased. The Wuzeer did not behave so well as expected; he was not collected, nor had he presence of mind to act in combination; the Urzbegy was greatly frightened, and did much harm by unnerving the Wuzeer, who with difficulty could be prevented from following his suggestions, to leave the Fausse-braie and muster the men in the city. The defenders—the people about*—abused, and several times had to lay hold of the Wuzeer and point to him the men, who turned as soon as he did. At last he got furious, and laid on as before-mentioned, without even knowing whom he struck. The alarming state of things at this point, and the frequent messages for aid, put in motion nearly half the garrison and all the chiefs of distinction, so that when the business was over, men came pouring in so as to fill the upper Fausse-braie; but the men appointed for the defence of the Fausse-braies were so panic-struck, that they took advantage of the watch being temporarily removed from the gates to abscond, and it was with great difficulty that a sufficient number of the garrison could be procured to defend the point.”

It is not to be doubted that the Heratees owed it to the young Englishman that Herat did not at this time fall into

* By “those about him,” here and in the preceding page, the reader is to understand Eldred Pottinger. It is known that he seized Yar Mahomed by the wrist, dragged him forward, and implored him to make one more effort to save Herat.

1838.

the hands of the Persians. But this can be gathered only incidentally from Pottinger's journal. Two days afterwards I find him thus expressing his astonishment at the result. "A man arrived from Kurookh; he said he had left a detachment of six thousand Orgunjees, who only waited for orders to foray, or even attack the Persian outposts; I was surprised to find my share of the business of the 25th had reached Kurookh. The moment the man arrived, he seized and kissed my hands, saying he was rejoiced he made so great a pilgrimage." But it was not all fame. The great things which had been done by the individual gallantry of this one English gentleman increased the difficulties of his position. It was soon plain that the Heratees really wished to get rid of him. The entries in his diary show the perplexities in which he was placed: "July 8th. Had a visit from the head Jews, to thank me for my interference, and found that they were still in fear. . . . The Persians wrote to Yar Mahomed Khan, that they would give up Herat to the Wuzeer, if he would but send Kamran and me to them as prisoners; I told him he had nothing to do but to tell me to go, and I would go to them of myself, if they said that was all they wanted. He appeared to perfectly understand the deceitful nature of the offering. 25th. The Wuzeer received a letter from Hadjee Abdool Mahomed in the Persian camp, *upbraiding him for joining with infidels against Islam*, and for holding on by the skirt of the English, from whom he could never receive any advantage; that they would flatter him and give money as long as suited their interest, as they do in India, and when they had made a party in the country and knew all its secrets they would take it for themselves; that the Government found such was what they wanted to do in Persia, but had on the discovery prevented it by turning them away; and that until the Envoy of these blasphemers—myself—was also turned out of the city, they would not allow the Mooshtuhid to venture into the city. A note to the same effect was received from the Wuzeer's brother, with the addition that the Russian Envoy would not send his agent till I left.—July 6th. In the morning, the Afghans had a consultation of what they would answer. At last it was resolved the Wuzeer should write in answer, that the Englishman is a stranger and

1838.

guest, that he had come to the city, and in the present state of affairs the Afghans could not think of turning him out of the city; for in the distracted state of the country he could not arrive in safety in his own country, and if anything happened to him it would be a lasting disgrace to the Afghan name, and as a guest he must go or stay according to his own pleasure; moreover, the Wuzeer wrote that he did not hold out in expectation of aid from the English, that he had no wish to join that state against Persia (Iran), from his connexion with which he had no wish to tear himself, but that the Persians would give him no choice, but surrendering or fighting, which he did from necessity and not from being so absurd as to wait for aid from London.—August 6th. In the evening, when the Persians had gone, went to the assembly. The Wuzeer told me that, the whole business being upon me, the Persians made a point of obtaining my dismissal, without which they would not treat. They were so pressing that he said he never before guessed my importance, and that the Afghan envoys, who had gone to camp, had told him they had always thought me one man, but the importance the Persians attached to my departure showed I was equal to an army. The Afghans were very complimentary, and expressed loudly their gratitude to the British Government, to the exertions of which they attributed the change in the tone of the Persians; they, however, did not give the decided answer they should have, but put the question off by saying I was a guest.—August 30th. The movement of the Persians is spoken of with increased positiveness, but no certain intelligence could be procured, notwithstanding the Afghans were grumbling at the delay of the English, and Yar Mahomed himself was one of the agitators of this feeling, he giving out in public that, in his opinion, the English Government intended to drop the connexion, that it wanted merely to destroy the Persian power, and did not care if the Herat power was at the same time rooted up. All sorts of absurd rumours were rife; but a very general opinion, originating from the Persian zealots, was that the British and Russian Governments were in alliance to destroy Mahomedanism and partition off the country, dividing India from Russia, between them.”

Soon after this, the siege was raised. The Persians, moved

1838.

by their repeated failures, and by the demonstration made by the British in the Persian Gulf, struck their camp, and Herat was saved—saved, as we may believe, under Providence, by the wonderful energy of the young artilleryman, who had done so much to direct the defence and to animate the defenders. We shall never very accurately know the full extent of the service which Eldred Pottinger rendered to the beleaguered Heratees; and for this reason (as I have before said), that the extreme modesty of the journal, which lies before me, has greatly obscured the truth. He was at all times slow to speak of himself and his doings; and it can be gathered only inferentially from his narrative of the siege, that he virtually conducted the operations of the garrison. That the Persians believed this is certain; and it is equally clear that, although Yar Mahomed and other Heratee chiefs, being naturally of a boastful, vain-glorious character, endeavoured to claim to themselves the chief credit of the victory, the people in the surrounding country knew well that it was to the personal gallantry of the young Englishman that they owed their salvation from the Persian yoke. But he was himself greatly surprised at the result, and when the siege was over declared it to be the strangest thing in the world that such a place and such a garrison could have held out for so many months against the whole Persian army, aided, if not directed, by European officers, and under the inspiring influence of the personal presence of the Shah. In an elaborate report upon Herat, which he drew up nearly two years afterwards, he said: “It is my firm belief that Mahomed Shah might have carried the city by assault the very first day that he reached Herat, and that even when the garrison gained confidence, and were flushed with the success of their sorties, he might have, by a proper use of the means at his disposal, taken the place in twenty-four hours. His troops were infinitely better soldiers than ours, and twice as good troops as the Afghans. The non-success of their efforts was the fault of their generals. . . . The men worked very well at the trenches, considering they were not trained sappers, and the practice of their artillery was really superb. They simply wanted engineers and a general to have proved a most formidable force.”

There was now a season of repose for Herat, but it was the repose of utter prostration. The long protracted siege, and the exactions which had attended it, had reduced the people to a condition of unexampled misery. The resources of the state were exhausted; the people were starving; and Yar Mahomed was endeavouring to recruit his finances by the old and cherished means of slave-dealing. In this crisis Pottinger put forth all his energies a second time for the defence of Herat. By obtaining from his Government advances of money he was enabled to restore both trade and cultivation, which had been well-nigh suspended, and thus large numbers of people, who had emigrated in despair, were induced to return to their homes. The ascendancy which he thus obtained enabled him to exert his influence for the suppression of the horrible traffic in human flesh—good work, in which he was aided by Colonel Stoddart, who remained for some time at Herat with him. But these and other humane efforts for the protection of the people were distasteful in the extreme to Yar Mahomed, and a few months after the raising of the siege the English officers were openly insulted and outraged. Colonel Stoddart quitted Herat for Bokhara in the month of January; and Pottinger, after the insults he had received, would have gone also, but he was earnestly implored by Shah Kamran to remain, and he knew that it was the wish of his Government that he should not quit his post. 1838—39.

In the mean while, the Government of India were equipping the Army of the Indus, and maturing their measures for the restoration of Shah Soojah to “the throne of his ancestors.” Their first manifesto was put forth on the 1st of October, at which time intelligence of the retreat of the Persians from before Herat had not reached Lord Auckland. At the end of this manifesto there was a notification distributing the agency by which our diplomatic operations in Afghanistan were to be conducted, and Lieutenant Eldred Pottinger was then appointed senior Political Assistant to the Envoy and Minister. But, after a little while, news came that the siege had been raised, and another public announcement was put forth, de- Nov. 8, 1838. claring that although the British Government regarded the retreat of the Persians as a just cause of congratulation, it was still intended to prosecute with vigour the measures

1839—40. which had been announced, “with a view to the substitution of a friendly for a hostile power” in Afghanistan, and to the establishment of a permanent barrier against schemes of aggression on our North-Western Frontier. And then the Governor-General proceeded to render honour to Eldred Pottinger in these becoming terms: “The Right Honourable the Governor-General is pleased to appoint Lieutenant Eldred Pottinger, of the Bombay Artillery, to be Political Agent at Herat, subject to the orders of the Envoy and Minister at the Court of Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk. This appointment is to have effect from the 9th of September last, the date on which the siege of Herat was raised by the Shah of Persia. In conferring the above appointment on Lieutenant Pottinger, the Governor-General is glad of the opportunity afforded him of bestowing the high applause which is due to the signal merits of that officer, who was present in Herat during the whole of the protracted siege, and who, under circumstances of peculiar danger and difficulty, has by his fortitude, ability, and judgment, honourably sustained the reputation and interests of his country.”

Departure
from Herat.

So Eldred Pottinger continued to dwell at Herat until September, 1839, by which time Major D'Arcy Todd had arrived on a special mission, of which mention is made in a subsequent Memoir. Pottinger then made his way by the route of Bameean to Caubul, where he found the British Army encamped, and the British Embassy, under Macnaghten, established. After a brief residence there, he quitted the Afghan territory, and went down to meet the Governor-General in the Upper Provinces of India. He was warmly welcomed by Lord Auckland, who received with the liveliest interest the information with which he was laden, and would have heard with warmer admiration his narrative of the stirring scenes in which he had been engaged, if he had spoken more of himself and his actions. He was of course invited to join the Government circle at dinner; but nothing was known of his arrival until the guests were assembling in the great dinner-tent. Then it was observed that a “native,” in Afghan costume, was leaning against one of the poles of the tent; obviously a shy, reserved man, with somewhat of a downcast look; and the Government-House Staff looked

askance at him, whispered to each other, wondered what intruder he was, and suggested to each other that it would be well for some one to bid him to depart. But the "some one" was not found; and presently the Governor-General entered, and leading his sister, Miss Eden, up to the stranger, said, "Let me present you to the hero of Herat." And then, of course, there was a great commotion in the tent, and, in spite of etiquette, the assembly burst into something like a cheer.*

1840—41.

Then Eldred Pottinger went down to Calcutta and remained there for some time, during which he drew up certain valuable reports on Herat and the adjacent country. In the mean while, Major Todd was doing the work of the Political Agency, to which Pottinger in the first instance had been appointed, and it was not thought expedient to disturb the arrangement. So another post was found for the young Bombay Artilleryman, and the year 1841 found him again serving in Afghanistan. He had been appointed Political Agent on the Turkistan frontier, and his head-quarters were in Kohistan, or the country above Caubul, where he dwelt, with a small staff of officers and a native escort, in what was known as the Lughmanee Castle.

As the autumn advanced, Pottinger saw most clearly that there was mischief in the air; that the measures of retrenchment, so injurious to the interests of the Kohistanee as of other chiefs, were fast relaxing the only hold which we had upon their forbearance. The tie which bound them to us was the tie of gratified avarice. But now our great system of bribery was beginning to collapse. When Pottinger knew what had been done, he scented the danger at once, and he wrote several letters of earnest remonstrance to Sir William Macnaghten. "In September," wrote Pottinger, "the Envoy sent several back; not understanding the reason why, I remonstrated with him, and he then informed me that he was ordered by Government to make retrenchments, and that it had been resolved to diminish the gross amount of pay to the militia throughout the country by one-third. Immediately on the receipt of this I wrote as strongly as, it appeared to me, became my situation, to the Envoy, and pointed out the danger likely to accrue from irritating the

The Kohistan
insurrection.

* See note in Appendix.

1841.

minds of people in a province so surrounded by rebellious districts, and particularly the gross breach of public faith which would be committed if this measure were carried into effect throughout the Kohistan, and begged he would, at least, spare the chiefs installed last year (1840). The Envoy replied that he could not help the reduction, as his orders were peremptory, but he informed me that the chiefs who were advanced under our knowledge during the past year should be considered as excused." Day after day appearances became more threatening. It was plainly necessary to do something. If we could not any longer purchase the submission of the chiefs, we might overawe them by a display of force. So Pottinger went to Caubul, and urged upon the Envoy the expediency of sending an expedition into the Nijrow country, and "getting rid of some of the most dangerous of our enemies." To this Sir William Macnaghten was averse. "He, however," wrote Pottinger, "referred me to General Elphinstone, and told me that if the General would consent, he would. On visiting the General, I found that he had received such reports of the country, that he would not permit an expedition without further information; whereupon I offered to take any officers the General might select and show them the country, as my presence in the Kohistan was necessary. I returned there before anything was determined."

During the early part of October, the Kohistanees remained outwardly quiet; but day after day brought new rumours of coming insurrection, which Pottinger duly reported to headquarters. But both Macnaghten and Burnes said that they could see no grounds of alarm—no cause for suspicion. "Notwithstanding," said Pottinger, "by the end of the month my suspicions were so aroused, that I felt it my duty to recommend that hostages should be demanded from the Kohistanee chiefs. To this measure the Envoy reluctantly consented, and I only succeeded in procuring them by the end of the month, when everything betokened a speedy rupture." The enemy were then gathering around him; and though many of the chiefs came to him with professions of friendship and offerings of service on their lips, he clearly saw the necessity of strengthening his position and taking

precautions against a sudden attack. But it was necessary, at the same time, to veil his suspicions, and therefore, as he said, his defensive operations were restricted to half-measures.

1841.

It has already been told how on the second day of November the storm burst furiously over Caubul. It soon swept into the Kohistan. On the morning of the third, it was plain, from the number of armed men that were gathering round the Lughmanee Castle, that the crisis was close at hand. The chiefs, however, still professed friendship, and clamoured for rewards. Pottinger then told the principal men that if they would render the service required from them they should have not only rewards, but dresses of honour from the King. They appeared to be satisfied, but said it was necessary that this should be explained to the petty chiefs who were in the adjacent garden. On this, Pottinger sent out his Assistant, Lieutenant Rattray, to commune with them. Soon conscious that foul play was designed, Rattray was about to leave the assembly, when he was shot down. A friendly Afghan had run to the castle to apprise Pottinger that treachery was around him. "He had scarcely made me comprehend his meaning," wrote Eldred, "as he spoke by hints, when the sound of shots alarmed us. The chiefs with me rose and fled, and I escaped into the castle through the postern-gate, which being secured, I ran on the terre-plain of the ramparts, and thence saw Mr. Rattray lying badly wounded about three hundred yards distant, and the late tenderers of service making off in all directions with the plunder of the camp. Before I was master of these facts, a party of the enemy crossing the field observed Mr. Rattray, and running up to him, one put his gun to his head and despatched him, whilst several others fired their pieces into different parts of his body."

And now what was to be done? The enemy were swarming around him; and those of his own people, who remained faithful among the faithless, were few. Captain Codrington was then with Pottinger in Lughman, but his regiment was three miles off, at Charekur. The alarm, however, had been given; and in the course of the afternoon, young Haughton, the Adjutant of the Ghoorkhas, a gallant soldier, who has well fulfilled the promise of his youth, appeared with two

1841. companies of the regiment, and then Codrington, mustering what men he could, made a sortie and joined him. There was then some sharp fighting, and the gardens were cleared. By this time night was falling. It was the duty both of Codrington and Haughton to return to Charekur; but they left Pottinger some sixty men, which made up his entire garrison to a hundred, all the ammunition at his disposal amounting to only fifteen rounds a man. But his friends of the Ghoorkha regiment promised to bring him fresh supplies and new reinforcements of men on the morrow; so he determined, with God's will, to maintain his post.

But it was not so ordained. The attempted relief failed. Codrington sent out four companies of the Ghoorkhas and a six-pounder gun; and if the gallantry of the young officers, Haughton and Salisbury, could have ensured success, the desired succour would have been conveyed to the Lughmanee Castle. But the enemy were numerous, and some of our troops were young and impetuous. The detachment was, therefore, compelled to fall back with heavy loss. Salisbury was killed, and Haughton was obliged to take back the remains of his disheartened party to Charekur. "On perceiving the retreat," wrote Pottinger, "I concluded Captain Codrington would not again attempt to relieve me, and as I had no ammunition beyond the supply in the men's pouches, I determined to retreat on Charekur after dark; but the better to hide my intention, order grain to be brought into the castle."

By wise arrangements, which eluded the vigilance of the enemy, Pottinger with a few followers contrived to make good his retreat to Charekur, under the shadow of the night. He had scarcely thrown himself into that place, when the enemy began to rage furiously against the people of the King and his supporters. The time for negotiation had passed; so Pottinger, divesting himself of his political character, took command of the guns, and prepared to resist the insurgents.

The little garrison had stout hearts, and they fought manfully, making frequent sorties against the enemy, but prevailing not against the crowds that were gathering around them. In one of these sorties Pottinger was wounded by a musket-shot in the leg; and soon afterwards, Captain Codrington, who commanded, was killed. Then young Haughton took

the command, and against fearful odds performed feats of heroic gallantry, which won the admiration and perhaps excited the not ungenerous envy of his disabled comrade.*

1841.

There was, however, an enemy which it was impossible to resist. The little garrison held out manfully against vastly superior numbers, but they were perishing from thirst. The insurgents had cut off their supplies of water, and there was no hope for them. Reduced to this strait, they were summoned to surrender. The condition to secure their safety was that Christians and Hindoos alike should accept the Mahomedan faith. "We came to a Mahomedan country," answered Pottinger, "to aid a Mahomedan sovereign in the recovery of his rights. We are, therefore, within the pale of Islam, and exempt from coercion on the score of religion." They told him that the King had ordered the attack, and he replied, "Bring me his written orders. I can do nothing without them."

But the thirst was destroying them. The last drop of water had been served out; and when they endeavoured to steal out in the night to obtain a little of the precious moisture from a neighbouring spring, the enemy discovered them and shot them down like sheep. There was failure after failure, and then the disciplined fighting men became a disorganised rabble. The few that remained staunch were very weak, and they had but a few rounds of ammunition in their pouches. With this little body of Ghoorkha troops, Pottinger and Haughton, having taken counsel together, determined to fight their way to Caubul. The story of their escape shall be told in Pottinger's own words: "On the 12th," he wrote, "after dark, Mr. Haughton ordered out a party to cover the water-carriers in an attempt to get water. The Sepoys, however, left the ranks to supply themselves, and dispersed on being fired at; in consequence, the water-carriers failed in their object. A sortie, consisting of two companies, under Ensign

* After the death of Captain Codrington, wrote Pottinger in his Budeeabad report, the enemy were "repulsed with loss from the barracks, when Mr. Haughton, on whom had devolved the command, followed up the success and drove the enemy back by a sortie far beyond the gardens occupied in the morning, and maintained the ground despite the incessant attacks of the

enemy, who did not desist till dark." And again: "On the 9th, the enemy blew up a part of the south-west tower, owing to the carelessness of the guard. Before, however, the enemy could profit by the breach and the panic of our men, Mr. Haughton rallied the fugitives, and leading them back, secured the top of the parapet with a barricade of board and sand-bags."

1841.

Rose, was then ordered : one company separated, and the men left their officers in search of water ; the other company, under Mr. Rose himself, fell on a post of the besiegers, and put every man of it to death. They, however, became unaccountably panic-struck (lest the enemy should come down in force), and fled back to the barrack. Mr. Rose, being left nearly alone, was obliged to return without gaining his object. Mr. Haughton having apprised me of these circumstances, and that the corps was nearly disorganised from the privations it had suffered, the utter inefficiency of the native officers (who had no sort of control over the soldiers), the exhaustion of the men from constant duty, the total want of water and provisions, I considered that one only chance of saving any portion of the regiment was a retreat on Caubul, and though that was abundantly perilous, I entertained a hope that the most active men, who were not encumbered with wives and children, might reach it in safety. Mr. Haughton coincided, but lest the enemy should hear of our intention, we resolved that the men should not be informed till paraded for starting. In the afternoon of the 13th, Mr. Haughton discovered amongst the Punjab artillerymen two men who had deserted from that body a few days previous, and, while apprehending them, the Jemadar of artillery snatched a sword from a bystander, and before aid could be given cut down and severely wounded that officer. He then, followed by the artillerymen, and the greater number of the Mahomedans in the castle (barracks) taking advantage of the opportunity, ran off at the same time. This caused such a tumult, that, at first, I feared the enemy had attacked and were driving our men from the walls ; under this impression I had myself hurried to the main gate, but found on arrival that Dr. Grant had secured that, and rallied the men. The native officers immediately gathered round with many of the Sepoys, to assure me of their fidelity ; but the latter were evidently disorganised, which may be judged of from the fact of their having plundered the treasure and Captain Codrington's quarters the moment I left them, and, in face of the enemy's fire, pulled down the officers' boxes which had been piled up as traverses to cover the doorways, broken them open, and pillaged them. In the evening (Dr. Grant having previously spiked all the guns with his own hands), we marched out of the barracks by the postern. The

1841.

advance was led by myself (as Mr. Haughton, who accompanied me, was unable to do more than sit on his horse), Dr. Grant brought out the main body, and Ensign Rose, with the quartermaster-sergeant, brought up the rear. I found it totally impossible to preserve any order after leaving the gate, and in vain attempted leading the men to besiege a building generally occupied by the enemy after nightfall, so that we might cover the exit of the main body from the barracks; and it was not without much difficulty I eventually succeeded in halting the men about half a mile from the barracks, till Mr. Rose, with the rear, closed up. Dr. Grant, however, was missing, and was never afterwards seen. After this we proceeded in a disorderly crowd along the road to Sinjtdereh, on which I knew we should soonest find water. At the first place we did so; a great delay took place, and I, with the advance, suddenly found we were separated from the main body, but after some search I rejoined them. Below Sinjtdereh we were obliged to leave the road, lest alarm should be taken, and were considerably delayed before we found the road again on the other side of the village. On reaching Istalif we were obliged to do the same thing, when finding very few men inclined to push on, and that I was getting exhausted with the pain of my wound and fatigue, I determined pushing on with Mr. Haughton, and trying to reach Caubul before daylight. Neither of us was capable of exertion or of sustaining the fatigue consequent on the slow movements of the regiment; we, therefore, rode on, but having no guide we got into so many difficulties, that day was breaking when we reached the range of mountains about half way between Charekur and Caubul, where, at Mr. Haughton's advice, our horses and selves being quite exhausted, we halted in a deep and dry ravine. Our other companions were a Sepoy of the regiment, my English writer, and the regimental bunya. In the forenoon we were alarmed by firing in the mountains above us, but otherwise we passed the day undisturbed. At dusk we resumed our route. Being prevented by watch-fire attempting to gain the high road, we followed a sheep-path over the mountain into the plain of Altifat, which we crossed, avoiding the castle of that name, and leaving the main road; from that plain crossed the remaining range of hills by a foot-path descending into the Caubul plain behind the lake, round

1841. the southern end of which we took our road, intending to cross the cultivated land to cantonments by the back of the Shah's garden at Kila-boleno. Where we should have branched off, I missed the turn, and as we were within the enemy's sentinels I feared to attract observation by turning (when I discovered my mistake); this obliged me to make for Deh-Afghan, intending to try that road, but on reaching that we found the place occupied, and ourselves so urgently challenged by the sentinels, that we were obliged to pass on to the city, which having gained without interruption, we pursued our way through the lanes and bazaar along the river-bank till we gained the skirts of the city, where we found a picket. We had nearly passed, when we were observed and called on to stop, and as we did not do so, several pursued us, but as the horses gained on them, they fired, and we received a volley from the now aroused picket, fortunately without any injury, and a few hundred yards farther carried us to our own entrenched cantonment, which we found besieged. My wound had become so painful and irritated from want of dressing and exertion, that I was obliged to keep my bed for some time."

I have suffered Eldred Pottinger to tell his own story, but one incident omitted from the narrative must be told here to complete the recital. When they were not far from Caubul, Haughton feeling utterly exhausted from pain, loss of blood, fatigue, and want of food, implored Pottinger to leave him to die and to save his own life. Pottinger said that he would die with his comrade, but that he would never desert him; and after resting awhile, both contrived to struggle on, and were, almost miraculously, saved.

When Eldred Pottinger reached Caubul, he was compelled, for some time, to nurse his wounds; but, before long, the great crisis of the insurrection brought him again to the front. Sir William Macnaghten, who was at the head of the British Mission, was slain by Akbar Khan; and every man in camp then felt that Pottinger was the man above all others to rescue the English from the difficulties which hemmed them in as with a ring of fire. It was on the 23rd of December, 1841, that the Envoy was killed. On the 25th, Pottinger wrote to Major Macgregor, who was Political Agent at Jellalabad:

“Caubul, December 25, 1841.

1841.

“MY DEAR MACGREGOR,—We have had a sad Comedy of Errors, or rather tragedy here. Macnaghten was called out to a conference and murdered. We have interchanged terms on the ground he was treating on for leaving the country; but things are not finally settled. However, we are to fall back on Jellalabad to-morrow or next day. In the present disturbed state of the country we may expect opposition on the road, and we are likely to suffer much from the cold and hunger, as we expect to have no carriage for tents and superfluities. I have taken charge of the Mission. Mackenzie, Lawrence, and Conolly are all seized. The first two I fear for. The latter is quite safe. The cantonment is now attacked.

“Yours, very truly,

“ELDRED POTTINGER.”

Five days afterwards he wrote to Captain Mackeson, at Peshawur—disguising the language of his letter in French, and signing his name in Greek, because there were those in the enemy's camp who could read English:

“Cantonnements à Cabool, 30^{me} de Décembre, 1841.

“MON CHER MACKESON,—J'ai eu le plaisir de recevoir votre lettre du 12^{me} au feu Envoyé. Notre situation ici est des plus dangereuses. L'Envoyé était tué à une conférence, qui avait lieu hors d'ici, le 23 de ce mois. Quand je prenais charge je trouvais qu'il avait engagé du part du gouvernement de quitter Afghanistan, et de donner *hostages* pour que le Dost soyait mis en liberté, aussi que pour préliminaires il avait rendu le *Balla Hissar* et les forts qui dominant les cantonnements. *Ces acts* et le manque des vivres faisaient les cantonnements untenable, et les quatre officiers militaires supérieurs disaient qu'il fallait résumer le traité au lieu de forcer une marche rétrograde sur Jellalabad. Nous avons aujourd'hui finis les termes du traité, et nous espérons partir d'ici demain ou après demain. De leur promesses je m'en doute, malgré que les ordres ont été expédiés pour que nos troupes quittent Candahar et Ghizny. Il faut que vous tenez ouvert le Khyber, et que vous soyez prêt nous aider le passage;

1841—42. car si nous ne sommes pas protégés, il nous serait impossible faire halte en route pour que les troupes se rafraichissent, sans laquelle j'ai peur qu'ils soient désorganisés.

“Votre ami,

“Ελδρεδ Ποττινγκερ.

“Après aujourd'hui j'écrirai mon nom en lettres Grecques. Lorsque le Cossid vous remettra cette lettre vous lui donnerez trois cent rupees.”

The capitulation.

It is hard to say what Eldred Pottinger suffered when he found himself compelled to negotiate with the enemy for the surrender of Caubul and the evacuation of the country. He vehemently opposed himself to the weak policy, which had been agreed upon before he was placed in the direction of affairs. He protested; he remonstrated; but all in vain. The military authorities had determined that they could fight no longer, and that there was nothing to be done but to make an ignominious retreat from the country which they had so proudly invaded. The explanation of the circumstances which at last compelled him, sorely against the promptings of his own courageous heart, to negotiate with the Afghan chiefs for a safe-conduct, is on record. “We received,” he wrote, in a report to Government drawn up at a subsequent period, “a tender from Mahomed Oosman Khan, offering to escort the army to Peshawur for the sum of five lakhs of rupees, as had been offered him (he said) by Sir W. Macnaghten. At the same time, letters from Captains Macgregor and Mackeson were received, urging Sir William to hold out, and informing us of the reinforcements which were on their way from India. The information from the city showed that feuds were running high there, and that Shah Soojah appeared to be getting up a respectable party for himself. When I informed General Elphinstone of these facts, he summoned a council of war, consisting of Brigadier Shelton, Brigadier Anquetil, Lieut.-Colonel Chambers, Captain Bellew, and Captain Grant. At the Major-General's request I laid the above-mentioned facts, and the enemy's tenders, before these officers, and also my own opinion that we should not treat with the enemy, because—*firstly*, I had every reason to believe that the enemy

1842.

were deceiving us ; *secondly*, I considered it our duty to hold aloof from all measures which would tie the hands of Government as to its future acts ; and *thirdly*, that we had no right to sacrifice so large a sum of public money (amounting to nineteen lakhs) to purchase our own safety—or to order other commanding officers to give up the trusts confided to them—for it was especially laid down by writers on international law, that a General had no authority to make any treaty, unless he were able to enforce the conditions, and that he could not treat for the future, but only for the present. The council of war, however, unanimously decided that remaining at Caubul and forcing a retreat were alike impracticable, and that nothing remained for us but endeavouring to release the army, by agreeing to the tenders offered by the enemy ; and that any sum, in addition to what had already been promised by Sir William Macnaghten, if it tended to secure the safety of the army, would be well expended, and that our right to negotiate on these terms was proved by Sir William Macnaghten having agreed to them before his assassination. Under these circumstances, as the Major-General coincided with the officers of the council, and refused to attempt occupying the Balla Hissar, and as his second in command, who had been there, declared it impracticable, I considered it my duty, notwithstanding my repugnance to, and disapproval of the measure, to yield, and attempt to carry on a negotiation. For the reasons of the military authorities I must refer you to themselves.”

In a letter of a more private character, addressed to Captain Macgregor, our Political Agent at Jellalabad, Pottinger thus stated the necessities which had driven him to work out the capitulation, however distasteful to his individual manhood. “There are many points,” he wrote, “that my character requires me to explain, particularly that we continued our negotiations with the enemy in direct opposition to my advice, and that we were prevented from going into the Balla Hissar by the obstinacy of Brigadier Shelton, who declared the attempt impracticable. The General (Elphinstone), from his illness, was incapable of making up his mind, and the constant assertion of the impossibility by his second in command, outweighed the entreaties of the Envoy when alive

1842.

(who was always afraid to commit himself in military matters), and of mine afterwards ; and a retreat on Jellalabad was the only thing they would hear of ; and, notwithstanding that I pointed out the very doubtful character of any engagement we might make with the heads of the insurgents, and the probability they could not make it good, and begged that they would spare us the dishonour and guard the loss which any negotiation must entail. In a council of war held at the General's house—Shelton, Anquetil, Chambers, Grant, and Bellew present—every one voted to the contrary ; so seeing I could do nothing, I consented. At the time we had but two courses open to us, which, in my opinion, promised a chance of saving our honour and part of the army. One was to occupy the Balla Hissar, and hold it till spring. By this we should have had the best chance of success. The other was to have abandoned our camp and baggage and encumbrances, and forced our way down. This was perilous but practicable. However, I could not persuade them to sacrifice baggage ; and that was eventually one of the chief causes of our disasters. You may conceive my anxiety to have this properly made known to Government.”

But when there was no longer any hope of that honourable resistance which Pottinger so persistently counselled, when the nobler and the manlier course was impossible to him in the face of this great military defection, Eldred Pottinger conceived it to be, as doubtless it was, his duty to do his best to extricate his countrymen from the perils which environed them. He had no special power or authority, which the military chiefs would have acknowledged, had he endeavoured to overrule their decision. He did not, by the death of the Envoy and Minister, succeed to the plenipotentiary chair. He was simply an “Assistant-Political,” of no very long standing in the department ; he was only a Lieutenant of Artillery ; all his weight in those wretched councils was derived, therefore, from his brave deeds ; and those were times when, though there were some noble hearts among our people at Caubul, a great depression had come upon the Many, and simple manliness was not potential for the preservation of the honour of the nation. If, then, those were times when the young Artilleryman thought that an appeal might be made to

1842.

the Army against the decree of the military leader, he soon felt that it was better to suppress the heroic aspiration. There was nothing, indeed, left for him but to endeavour to save his country from worse disasters than had already befallen it. So he bowed to the decision of the military chiefs.

“As soon as this was decided upon,” he wrote afterwards, “I commenced negotiating. The enemy’s first demand (on complying with which they promised to agree to the terms we offered on the 25th) was, that we should settle with the Hindoos they brought forward regarding the payment of the money the Envoy had promised, *i.e.* which the Council of War had decided should be paid. * * * I would willingly have avoided the payment of such ; but the enemy, by stopping our supplies, obliged me to suffer the imposition, as the military authorities were urgent to prevent a renewal of hostilities, cost what it might. These sums were promised in the name of Sir William Macnaghten, by his agent (the Naib Ameer), to the different chiefs, to bring about a treaty and support it when formed. Major-General Elphinstone recollected the Envoy having informed him of his having authorised the agent to make the promises, as also did Captain Skinner.”

So the name of “Eldred Pottinger, Major,”* was attached to the Treaty ; and on the 6th of January, 1842, the British army was under arms to march out of Caubul. But the escort, which the Afghan chiefs had promised for the protection of the conquered, had not been sent. “The military authorities, however,” wrote Pottinger, in the report above quoted, “refused to wait ; and notwithstanding my advice to the contrary, marched out of our entrenchments.” There was nothing but death before them ; for the snow had fallen heavily, and the wretched Hindostanee soldiers could not bear up against the rigours of the Northern winter. Pottinger clearly foresaw this, and endeavoured to impress upon the military authorities the importance of so clothing the Sepoys as to resist the severities of the winter, and enable them to escape the destructive bitings of the frost. “Major Pottinger” (it is narrated by Sir Henry Lawrence) “told us

* He had been promoted to a brevet majority, and created a Companion of the Bath, for his services at Herat.

1842. that when the retreat was decided on, and no attention was paid to his, Lawrence's, and Conolly's advice, to concentrate in the Balla Hissar, he urged the officers to have all the old horse-clothing, &c., cut into strips and rolled round the soldiers' feet and ankles after the Afghan fashion, as a better protection against snow than the mere hard leather of shoes. This he repeatedly urged, but in vain, and within a few hours the frost did its work. Major Pottinger said that there was not an Afghan around them who had not his legs swathed in rags as soon as the snow began to fall."

The retreat.

Then came that memorable retreat through the dreadful snow, of which history has but few parallels. The Afghans, whom there was no one to hold in restraint, swarmed down upon our unhappy people, and massacred them, benumbed and helpless as they were, almost without resistance. At last, the Barukzye chief, Akbar Khan, who had slain Sir William Macnaghten, appeared upon the scene, and promised to escort the remnant of the Army safely to the British frontier, if three hostages were given up to him as a guarantee for the evacuation of our outposts in other parts of the country. Brigadier Shelton and Captain Lawrence were named; but Shelton refused to go; so Pottinger offered to take his place, and the offer was accepted. George Lawrence and Colin Mackenzie were his companions.

Captivity.

From that time, in the early part of January, to the September of the same year (1842), Eldred Pottinger remained a prisoner in the hands of Akbar Khan. All the circumstances of this memorable captivity are well known, for there are few who have not read the interesting journals of Vincent Eyre and Florentia Sale. It is sufficient to write briefly of this period of suffering. From the middle of January to the middle of April the prisoners were confined in the fort of Budeeabad. There Pottinger drew up for Government an elaborate report of the circumstances, so far as he was himself connected with them, of the rising in the Kohistan and of the subsequent Caubul capitulation, from which document I have quoted freely in the course of this narrative. From Budeeabad they were removed to a fort on the Loghur river, a few miles from Caubul, where they enjoyed comparative comfort and freedom. Although a prisoner, and as such incapable, in a strict sense,

1842.

of official action, he was still recognised both by captive and captor as the responsible political authority, and was in frequent communication both with Akbar Khan and with General Pollock respecting the terms of a mutual surrender of prisoners. It was natural and right that, in such circumstances, Pollock, who was advancing with his Army of Retribution upon Caubul, should have been suspicious of overtures made by the enemy through a prisoner who was completely at his mercy. And it is curious to observe in the correspondence between the old and the young soldier, how two brave and honourable men, regarding from different stand-points this matter of negotiation, looked with very different eyes upon the same manifestations. Pollock could not but regard the murderer of the British Envoy as a blood-stained criminal with whom it was sore distress, and indeed almost humiliation, to treat upon anything like equal terms. But Pottinger, who had lived too long in intimate relations with the Afghans to feel very sensitive on this score, told the General that his communications to the Sirdar were considered most offensive, and deprecated the tone of Pollock's letters. It was, undoubtedly, a difficult conjuncture, for many believed that if Akbar Khan were driven to despair, he would in revenge massacre the prisoners. But General Pollock judged, and judged rightly, that the bolder and more defiant the attitude which we assumed, the greater would be the safety of the prisoners; for in Afghanistan every man's hand was against his neighbour, and it was certain that there would be found those whose interest it would be, for their own sake, to side with the English who were advancing upon the capital.

It was at this period, in the summer of 1842, when Pottinger, Troup, and Colin Mackenzie were separated from the other prisoners, and in the immediate custody of Akbar Khan, that an incident occurred so characteristic of Pottinger's indomitable courage, that no record of his life would be complete without its recital. The bills which he had drawn upon India for the purpose of extricating the British Army from the toils that surrounded them, after the military leaders had determined to retreat, were repudiated by the Government. When intelligence of this reached the leading Afghan Sirdars, they were exceedingly wroth, and they determined

1842. that Pottinger should be compelled to draw fresh bills upon his Government. The chiefs who assailed him were Ameen-oollah Khan, who had instigated the murder of Burnes; Mahomed Shah Khan, Akbar's father-in-law, who was the very mainspring of the insurrection; and another of some note. Suddenly entering the cell in which the three Englishmen were confined, they told Pottinger that his bills had been protested, and with fierce and insolent menaces told him that he must immediately sign others. At first he tried to persuade them of the inutility of such an act, as the new bills would meet with the same fate as the old. They would not accept the plea, and renewed their threats; so he turned a grim, stern face upon them, and said, "You may cut off my head if you will, but I will never sign the bills." The chiefs took counsel with each other, and hastily leaving the room went to Akbar Khan, who was in an apartment above, and asked what was to be done. But that chief knew too well the kind of man with whom he had to deal to attempt personal violence, which was certain to have no effect in inducing him to swerve from his resolution.*

The rescue.

To the bold front which Eldred Pottinger assumed, when tidings came that General Pollock was advancing victoriously upon Caubul, the captives owed it mainly, under Providence, that they finally obtained their release. From the neighbourhood of Caubul the captives were carried off to Bameean. As briefly told by the historian of the war, there is something almost ludicrous in the confidence of this little band of Englishmen. For we are told that, at Bameean, "they deposed the governor of the place, and appointed a more friendly chief in his stead. They levied contributions on a party of Lohanee merchants who were passing that way, and so supplied themselves with funds. And, to crown all, Major Pottinger began to issue proclamations, calling upon all the neighbouring

* Whilst in this tower, Pottinger, learning that there was a supply of powder stored in it, proposed to take advantage of the opportunity when Akbar Khan and some of the leading chiefs were in the upper rooms, to set fire to a train and blow up the place, the Englishmen taking their chance of escaping disguised in the confusion. But his more prudent companions protested against the scheme.

1842.

chiefs to come in and make their salaam; he granted remissions of revenue; and all the decent clothes in the possession of the party were collected to bestow as *khelats* (dresses of honour).” And there was wisdom in this; for so true is the old adage, “*Possunt qui posse videntur.*”*

The account of these proceedings, which Pottinger has officially recorded, is of the most inornate character; but as such, so characteristic that I am induced to insert it. No man’s reputation ever owed less to his own utterances. He was quite incapable of a flourish:

“TO MAJOR-GENERAL POLLOCK, C.B., COMMANDING IN
AFGHANISTAN.

“Caulul—Camp Racecourse, September 21, 1842.

“SIR,—I have the honour to report my arrival in your camp, and beg to lay before you the following statement of the measures we had recourse to at Bameean to effect our release. On the 10th of this month, Syed Moortiza Kashmeeree, an agent of Ali Reza Khan Kuzilbash, arrived in Bameean: he had received from Moonshee Mohun Lal verbal assurances that all those who would engage in effecting our release should be handsomely rewarded, and that a pension should be paid to himself and Saleh Mahomed Khan, who commanded the Afghan regiment sent to escort the prisoners to Toorkistan. Syed Moortiza brought urgent letters from the Kuzilbash chiefs to their clansman, Saleh Mahomed, and having gained over his brother, Mahomed Sadig Khan, paid him fifty out of a hundred rupees which had been furnished by Moonshee Mohun Lal, and carried him along with himself. They alighted at the dwelling of Mahomed Turym Beg, the chief of the Bameean Tajiks, and Syed Moortiza thence sent Mahomed Sadig to speak with Saleh Mahomed; the result was, an interview between Syed Moortiza and Saleh Mahomed, when the latter declared that he would only consent to treat with myself and the other English officers.

“Saleh Mahomed then had an interview with me, and

* His services as chief political officer with the Caulul prisoners were highly appreciated by those who shared his captivity, and they subscribed to present him, after their release, with a testimonial, which he never lived to receive. But it was requested by the subscribers, who one and all mourned his decease, that it might be kept as an heirloom in his family.

1842. afterwards Captains Lawrence, Johnson, and myself had a meeting with him and Syed Moortiza, in which we agreed to give him a present of twenty thousand rupees, and to continue to him the command of his regiment on his present salary of one thousand rupees a month, granting him a full pardon for all past offences, and that we should sign a paper to this effect. Having so far discovered the sentiments of Saleh Mahomed Khan, we brought him to Major-General Shelton, and laid before that officer and Colonel Palmer the plan: both these officers declined affixing their signature to any such paper, lest they should implicate themselves with Mahomed Akbar Khan, whereupon we consulted with Major Griffiths and the rest of the prisoners, and resolved to attempt the plan at all risks, and that if we found it were an attempt to overreach us, we should try to seize the weapons of the guard, and hold out in the forts till succour arrived.

“As soon as this arrangement had been completed, we sent off Syed Moortiza to Mir Mowhib (chief of the Fowlady Hazarehs), to invite his aid, and he came the next day, *i. e.* the 12th, whereupon Naib Zoolfikar, the governor, sent a message to say he was willing to join us, and I requested, as a mark of his friendship, he would send arms for our party, which, however, he did not. The Mir Akhor Ahmed Khan also received a letter ordering us to be marched into Toorkistan, but Saleh Mahomed Khan refused to obey the order to start that day, as the men wanted pay. I received a letter from Naib Zoolfikar, offering service, and replied by requesting arms to be sent. As he did not send any, nor show any friendly feeling, but was said to be consulting with Ahmed Khan to attack us, I gave an order to Dyn Mahomed Khan, the former governor of Bameean (on the part of Khan Shireen Khan), to assume the government, employed men to frighten the Mir Akhor by telling him (as if from friendship) we had resolved to seize him, and promised the three companies a gratuity of four months' pay. These steps, joined to the arrival of Mir Kelb Ali of Besewt to join us, had the desired effect; the governor sent his brother to proffer service, and the Mir Akhowr fled, carrying off the Ghilzie firelock-men with him. On the 15th, news of the van of the British troops having advanced was received, and the Naib Zoolfikar

1842.

came in, and personally visited us, on my saying I would go and see him if he did not come to me. I could not persuade him to give us arms, but as it appeared imprudent to turn him into an enemy, I directed Dyn Mahomed Khan to hold the order I had given him in abeyance till the conduct of Naib Zoolfikar might be further developed. On the 15th, I received a note from Mirza Shahjy, informing me of the defeat of the Afghan troops at Jugduluk, and our advance from Ghuzni, also that the Kuzilbash tribes had risen in Caubul, which determined us to march the next day.

“On the 16th we marched to Topchi Bala, and encamped with the castles in our front, so that we could occupy them if need be. On the morning of the 17th I received a letter from Sir Richmond Shakespear, informing me that he had reached Sir-i-Cheshmeh with six hundred and ten Kuzilbash horse, to our aid. We immediately crossed the Kaloo Pass, and marched to the castle of Mir Morad Beg, near the foot of the Hajykek Pass, where we were joined by Sir Richmond Shakespear with the Kuzilbash horsemen, who had marched ninety miles from Caubul over that mountainous country in two marches. The 18th, being supplied with seventy-seven horses by the Kuzilbash, and twelve by the Hazarehs, we managed to march to Gurdendewal; at that place we learned that a body of horse and foot from the Shekhali and Ghorebund districts had marched on Kaloo to intercept us. On the 19th, with the same assistance as before, we marched to Thikaneh, where we heard that the pass of Sufeyd Khak was occupied by the Afghans, intending to check us. Sir R. Shakespear immediately wrote to request that the British officer—who, report also told us, was advancing in that direction—would occupy the pass, and to say we would, if opposed, hold out in some of the castles about till relieved. On the morning of the 20th we marched, and found the cavalry of Sir R. Sale’s detachment at Kote Ashroo, and his infantry holding the heights, and had the pleasure of joining his camp at Urghendeh, whence I proceeded with Major-General Nott’s camp, and, remaining there during the night, joined yours this morning. I have given the Hazareh chiefs, who joined us at first, remissions on their revenue, and on our march back I paid for the necessary

1842. supplies to the party, by orders on the revenue, to the amount of the supplies furnished.*

“In concluding this, I venture to request your supporting the steps I have taken, and recommending them to Government, and trust that my assuming the powers of a political agent under the circumstances of the case may be pardoned, for I believe in no other way would the release of our captives have been achieved, though I could with ease have effected my own escape. With regard to the pension of a thousand rupees, the prisoners have agreed to pay the amount if Government consider it too large, but considering that the man was then in receipt of that sum monthly, and that he may be obliged to flee the country if the Barukzyes regain power, I trust you will not consider it too large a sum to recommend the payment of.

“I have, &c.,

“ELDRED POTTINGER (Major).”

1843.
The Court of
Inquiry.

But when General Pollock's army marched back triumphantly to the British Provinces, it was a matter of official necessity that the conduct of Major Pottinger, who had signed a treaty for the evacuation of Afghanistan, and had drawn bills to a large amount on the British Government in payment to the enemy, should be submitted to investigation. A Court of Inquiry was therefore held, over which Mr. George Clerk† presided, and of which the members were Sir Harry Smith, Adjutant-General of Queen's Troops; General Lumley, Adjutant-General of the Bengal Army; Colonel Monteath,‡ who had distinguished himself in the defence of Jellalabad; and Colonel Wymer, an old Bengal officer, who had also done good service in Afghanistan. The inquiry commenced on Sunday, the 1st of January, 1843. Extracts from several official documents, including the Budeeabad Report, were read, but the only oral evidence taken was that of Pottinger himself. Some questions were put to him regarding events previous to the death of Sir William Macnaghten, to which he re-

* Some passages relating to the services of certain chiefs are omitted.

† Now (1867) Sir George Clerk,

G.C.S.I., K.C.B., Member of the Council of India.

‡ Now Sir Monteath Douglas, K.C.B.

1843.

plied that his opinions differed so much from those of the Envoy that there was very little confidential intercourse between them. He said that when he assumed charge of the Mission,* he was ignorant of very much that had taken place before the death of the Envoy ; and when he was asked what course he pursued when he became aware of existing circumstances, he replied : “ I waited upon General Elphinstone to ascertain his views, and applied for an officer to assist me in taking charge of the late Envoy’s office. At that interview with the General (several officers of rank being present), it was decided that if nothing were heard regarding the Envoy by a certain time, we should abandon our position at Caubul and march upon Jellalabad. I recommended that, at any rate, a decided course should be adopted : that we should either take possession of the Balla Hissar, or retire at once upon Jellalabad, waiting for no further communication with the enemy. In the afternoon I was again in consultation with the General, the officers attached to the Staff being present. A letter was received at that time from the enemy, containing overtures which the General said were the same as those to which the Envoy had agreed, with the exception of four additional clauses. To take this letter into consideration, the General sent for General Shelton, Brigadier Anquetil, and Colonel Chambers. I may add that this letter was accompanied by a note from Captain Lawrence, acquainting us for the first time with the death of the Envoy. I should also mention that Sir William Macnaghten, some time previously to his death, had told me that his letters from Government were of such a nature as to induce him to believe that although going into the Balla Hissar was probably our best course, still, if we remained there throughout the winter, we would in spring have eventually to force our way down to Jellalabad ; that he thought Government would be glad of what had occurred, as forming a pretext to shake off its connexion with the country. Remembering this observation of the Envoy’s, I did not oppose taking into consideration the enemy’s letter, but as it contained terms to which we could not agree, a proposal was made to the enemy to discuss

* Being asked why he assumed charge, he said that not only was he senior officer of the Mission, but that he “ was especially requested by General Elphinstone to take charge.”

1843.

the matter the next day, and it was further notified to them that it would be necessary to omit or alter the objectionable clauses, which were—calling upon us to give up our treasure, the ladies, our cannon, and the arms in store. The next morning I received a letter directed to the Envoy from Captain Macgregor, at Jellalabad, and Captain Mackeson, at Peshawur, to the effect that reinforcements were on their way from India, which, setting my mind at rest as to the chance of being abandoned, decided me to recommend the course described in my official despatch, dated the 1st of February, to the address of the Secretary to the Government.”

When questions were put to him regarding the bills, he replied: “In the Council of War it was decided that nineteen lakhs should be paid to the Afghan chiefs, on the understanding that they were to give their aid in making the treaty, and in escorting the troops safely to Peshawur. Fourteen lakhs of this sum of money had been previously promised to the above chief by Sir William Macnaghten’s agent, in his name, for the same purpose; and five more lakhs were added by the Council of War, for the purpose of purchasing Mahomed Othman Khan’s escort to Peshawur. I objected to the whole of this outlay, but being overruled by the consentient voices of the rest of the Council, I subsequently, as the agent of the Council of War, drew the bills in the usual official form on the Indian Government. In the first instance, the bills were made payable to the Afghan chiefs, perfectly understanding that they were only payable on the safe arrival of the Army at Peshawur, but the Hindoos refused to negotiate the bills in this form: they were consequently returned, and I was then directed by the General to draw them out in favour of the Hindoos, which was done, agents of the Hindostanees being warned, at the time of receiving the bills, of the circumstances under which they were drawn. It is also necessary to add that, shortly afterwards, when the news of the destruction of the Army reached Caubul, the Government agent at that place, Lieutenant John Conolly, expressly warned the Hindoos that the conditions on which the bills were granted having been infringed, payment would certainly be refused by Government. Lieutenant Conolly’s

report upon this head to Government is, I believe, before the Court; and he informed me personally that he had so reported, and that he warned the people."

1843.

The Court assembled again on the 2nd of January, when General Shelton, who had been second in command at Caubul, and Captain George Lawrence,* Sir William Macnaghten's secretary, were examined. General Shelton, when asked if Pottinger coincided in the opinion of the Council of War, that the Army should retire on Jellalabad, said: "To the best of my recollection Major Pottinger did *not* coincide." The evidence of Captain Lawrence related principally to the circumstances in which the bills upon Government were drawn. The Court then decided that no further evidence was necessary. The members then, beginning, according to rule, with the junior member of the Court, expressed their opinions—and these opinions varied—as to the official competency of Major Pottinger to draw such bills—not with respect to his conduct in drawing them. The final decision of the Court was what every one felt in his inmost heart that it must be. It only shed fresh lustre on Eldred Pottinger's reputation. "The Court," it stands on record, "cannot conclude its proceedings without expressing a strong conviction that throughout the whole period of the painful position in which Major Pottinger was so unexpectedly placed, his conduct was marked by a degree of energy and manly firmness that stamps his character as one worthy of high admiration."

Then Eldred Pottinger went down to Calcutta; and after a brief residence there, determined on a visit to his family in Europe. During his residence at the Presidency, as I well remember, the attempts to lionise him were very unsuccessful. Everybody was struck by the extreme modesty of his demeanour. He was shy and reserved, and unwilling to speak of himself. The impression which he made upon society generally was not favourable. He did not realise, either in his person, his conversation, or his manner, their ideal of a youthful hero, and, therefore, thoughtless people were disappointed. But to the more thoughtful few he appeared to

Last days.

* Now General Sir George Lawrence, K.S.I.

1843. be precisely the kind of man from whom such good deeds as had made him famous were to have been expected. Heroism takes many shapes. In Eldred Pottinger it took the shape of a sturdy and indomitable perseverance—a courage, great in resistance to apparently overwhelming odds; but there was nothing impetuous, nothing showy about it. And in all these respects the personal aspect and demeanour of the man represented his inward qualities.

What he might have done, had it pleased God to give him length of life, can only be conjectured; but even then he was nearly approaching the close of his earthly career. His uncle, Sir Henry Pottinger, was then at the head of the British Mission in China. Moved by feelings of affection and gratitude, Eldred resolved to pay his distinguished relative a visit; and during this visit, in a disastrous hour, he caught the Hong-Kong fever, and on the 15th of November, 1843, a career of the brightest promise was cut short by untimely death. It has been said that his life was embittered and his health impaired by the neglect—if it were only neglect—with which he had been treated on his return to India by Lord Ellenborough, whose prejudices against the Afghan Politicals were strong and deep. I know not how this was. It little matters now. The verdict of no ruler of a day can avail anything against the national judgment. The romance of Indian History has few more interesting chapters than the story of Eldred Pottinger—the Defender of Herat.

MAJOR D'ARCY TODD.

[BORN 1808.—DIED 1845.]

ELLIOTT D'ARCY TODD was born on the 28th of January, 1808, in Bury-street, St. James's. He was the third and youngest son of Mr. Fryer Todd, a Yorkshire gentleman, of good family and fortune, who, seeking to increase his store by speculation, had the ill fortune to reduce it. The undertakings in which he embarked were wholly unsuccessful, and when little D'Arcy was three years old, his home was broken up and swept away by the tide of misfortune, and it devolved on others to provide for the education of Mr. Todd's children. It happened, fortunately, that there were those who were both willing and able to undertake the charge. Mr. Todd had married Mary Evans—known in our literary history as the “Mary” of Samuel Taylor Coleridge;* and her brother, Mr. William Evans, held an important office in the home service

1808.

Parentage and
education.

* Coleridge was acquainted with, and attached to, her from a very early period of his life—even from the days when he was a blue-coat boy at Christ's Hospital. Years afterwards, she sometimes visited him, with her children, at Highgate, where I often myself saw him when a child, and sat upon his knee. In a letter, which he wrote in 1822, I find this reference to his early love: “Neither awake nor asleep have I any other feelings than what I had at Christ's Hospital. I distinctly remember that I felt a little flush of pride and consequence—just like what we used to feel at school when the boys came running to us: ‘Coleridge! here's your friends want you; they are quite *grand*!’ or, ‘It is quite a *lady*’—when I first heard who you were, and laughed at myself for it with that pleasurable sensation that, spite of my sufferings at that school, still accompanies any sudden reawakening of our schoolboy feelings and notions. And oh, from sixteen to nineteen what

hours of paradise had Allen and I in escorting the Miss Evanses home on a Saturday . . . ; and we used to carry thither, of a summer morning, the pillage of the flower-gardens within six miles of town, with sonnet or love-rhyme wrapped round the nosegay. To be feminine, kind, and genteelly (what I should now call neatly) dressed, these were the only things to which my head, heart, or imagination had any polarity, and what I was then I still am.”—Compare also the following: “About this time, he (Coleridge) became acquainted with a widow lady, whose son, said he, ‘I, as upper boy, had protected, and who therefore looked up to me, and taught me what it was to have a mother. She had three daughters, and of course I fell in love with the eldest. From this time to my nineteenth year, when I quitted school for Jesus, Cambridge, was the era of poetry and love.’”—*Gilman's Life of Coleridge*.

1811—23. of the East India Company.* He was very much attached to little D'Arcy ; and when he took upon himself the charge of the boy's education, he did so with the assured belief that the seed would fall upon good soil, and that there were in him the making of both a good and a great man. Almost from his cradle, D'Arcy had evinced, in his childish actions, the kindling of that martial enthusiasm which afterwards so unmistakably developed itself. It is remembered that, when only two or three years old, he would march about the house drumming, and would convert all the chairs in the nursery into soldiers, or cannon, or other insignia of war. In due time, however, he was sent by his uncle to school—first, to a preparatory seminary, kept by Miss Dawes, at Turnham Green, and afterwards to an academy at Ware, in Hertfordshire, where, although he developed no great amount of precocious genius, he made good progress, and took a respectable place in the school. He was always, indeed, fond of reading, and the books in which he most delighted were books of adventure, illustrative of self-help and self-reliance, or those which were largely tinged with the glowing imagery of the East. “ I have been reading *Robinson Crusoe* and the *Tales of the Genii*,” he wrote to his brother Frederick, when he was ten years old. “ They have amused me very much. I hope that you love reading as I do, and also that you remember what you read.”

From the year 1818 to 1822, D'Arcy Todd resided with his uncle in London, and attended a school in Poland-street. In the latter year, Mr. Evans, who had good interest with the Court of Directors, obtained an Addiscombe cadetship for his nephew, who joined the Company's Military Seminary when he had just completed his fourteenth year. He was at that time a very little fellow, and he was commonly called “ little Todd.” But, young as he was, he passed through Addiscombe with credit to himself, and obtained a commission in the Artillery. He was much esteemed by the professors and masters of the college, and beloved by his fellow-students. The progress which he made had greatly delighted his uncle. “ D'Arcy continues to get on at Addiscombe,” wrote Mr. Evans, in March, 1823, “ beyond anything I could have ex-

* Mr. Evans was “ Baggage Warehouse Keeper,” an office of some importance in the old commercial days of the Company.

pected. He is now high in the second class—a very unusual progress at his age. He is an excellent draughtsman, and well skilled in mathematics. I expect great things of him when he arrives in India.” 1823—24.

He passed his final examination in December, 1823. A few weeks afterwards he sailed for India, on board the *Duchess of Athol*. In the fiery month of May, young D’Arcy Todd, then little more than sixteen years old, landed at Calcutta. It has been a happy circumstance in the lives of many young officers in the Bengal Artillery that their first glimpses of military life were caught at the great head-quarters station of Dum-Dum. There were then, and many years afterwards, stationed there an unbroken succession of Christian men, whose care it was to preserve from evil the inexperienced youngsters who joined the regiment.* Young D’Arcy Todd fell into their good and kindly hands; and we soon find him writing thus seriously to his brother: “I hope you think sometimes about death, for it must come, and will seize you when you least expect it, if you are not prepared to meet that Saviour who died for you; for it will be too late on our death-bed to begin to repent. Do not call me a Methodist, my dear brother, for speaking thus to an elder brother, but I love you so much I cannot help speaking to you, as I have been spoken to whilst I have been here; for, when I arrived at Dum-Dum, I met an old friend of the name of Cookson, whom I formerly knew at Addiscombe. He asked me to his home, where I met a clergyman of the name of Craufurd, who taught me that the paths of sin are unhappiness and misery, and that the paths of righteousness are happiness. . . . May God bless and sanctify with his presence our meeting, and, short as the time will necessarily be, let it remind us that short is the space between the present and that when we shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.” And again: “You well know, my beloved brother, I would willingly, and with delight, pursue many a long and weary journey in the hope of embracing you. My heart fails me when I think of our approaching meeting, my brother, the

* Foremost amongst these was the late General Powney, of the Bengal Artillery—better known to his brother-officers, both at Dum-Dum and in Fort William, as “Major Powney”—a man of much Christian piety and great kindness of heart, hospitable and courteous, who, both by precept and example, led many young officers into the saving paths of truth.

1825—27. being nearest and dearest to me on earth, whose love I prize more than my lips or my pen could express. 'And it came to pass that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved David as his own soul.' This, dearest, expresses, I think, what we feel one towards the other. Oh, that the Lord may bless that love which exists between us, and perfect it in that blessed abode where partings shall be no more."

Bhurtpore.

At Dum-Dum, D'Arcy Todd remained until the rainy season of 1825, when, all his beloved friends having preceded him to the Upper Country, he was glad indeed to see his own name in orders for a march northward. He was posted to a company of Foot Artillery at Cawnpore; but he had served with it only a little while, when it was ordered to Bhurtpore to take part in the operations of that great siege which has made its name famous in history. There, for the first time, he stood face to face with the stern realities of actual warfare. On the 18th of January the great Jât fortress was carried by the British troops. "I went round the ramparts directly after the storm," wrote the young artilleryman to his brother, "and to me, who had scarcely ever seen a dead body before, the sight was most horrible." The work done, the battery to which he was attached was ordered back to Cawnpore; and there, for a time, young D'Arcy Todd found a home in the house of Major* and Mrs. Whish, whose society was as pleasant as it was profitable to him.

The Horse Artillery.

In the course of this year (1826), Second-Lieutenant Todd was posted to the Horse Artillery; but on his promotion in November, 1827, to the rank of First-Lieutenant, he was attached to a battalion of Foot. These changes are always ruinous to the finances of a young officer, and D'Arcy Todd, who had been anxious to remit money to England for the use of his sisters, was sorely disquieted by the heavy expenditure which it was necessary to incur for the purchase of uniforms and equipments. He determined, therefore, to make an appeal to the Commander-in-Chief, in the hope of being re-posted to the mounted branch of the regiment. "Thus far will I go, and no farther," he wrote to his brother. "If this attempt fails, I shall renew (I hope contentedly) my

* Afterwards Sir Samson Whish, K.C.B., the captor of Mooltan.

duties in the Foot, and leave the direction of my affairs to the hand of unerring wisdom, feeling assured that all things work together for good to those who fear the Lord." And not very long afterwards he obtained what he sought, for he was appointed to a troop of Horse Artillery stationed at Muttra. "From what I have observed of the different services," he wrote, "I now say that I would rather be in the Horse Artillery than any service in the world." He was very happy at this time, for he was domiciled with friends who were both pious and intellectual, and in their society time passed pleasantly away. "I have abundance to occupy both mind and body," he wrote to a member of his family in 1828, "from six in the morning to eleven at night. I divide the day regularly, and endeavour each hour to have a fixed employment. Adam, my favourite Christian author, says, 'Have a work to do daily, with a will to do it, and a prayer on it, and let that work be God's.' I meet the Lewins every morning at half-past eight, when we read and pray together. We then breakfast; after which we separate to our several studies until two P.M., when we read Russell's *Modern Europe* till four P.M. Then we dine; after which we separate till half-past six, when we read Milner's *History of the Church of Christ*—an admirable work. We separate at nine—having read and prayed together. In the hospital and school of the troop we have also a wide field for exertion, to the glory of God."

In November, 1828, Lieutenant Todd went down to Calcutta to be present at the marriage of one of his sisters; but though he moved with all possible despatch, he was too late for the ceremony. He was cheered, however, by the thought of meeting a beloved brother, from whom he had for some time been separated. The claims of his profession, at that busy period of the year, rendered the intercourse between the brothers only too brief. In January, 1829, D'Arcy Todd rejoined the Horse Artillery at Kurnaul; but, shortly after his arrival, ill health compelled him to proceed to the Hills. In this illness he derived the sweetest comfort from the ministrations of his friend, James Abbott, of the Artillery—one whose life has since been a career of romantic adventure, brightened by heroism of the true stamp. "My dearest of

1829-33.

friends, James Abbott," wrote D'Arcy Todd to his brother, "was unceasing in his brotherly attention. He never left my bedside. Oh! the goodness of God in giving me such a friend to smooth my pillow and to cheer me by his presence. He is the dearest friend of your brother. From the time we left Bhar—the foot of the Hills—he attended me on foot until we arrived here; and when he departed, my heart was agonised." No man ever made more or faster friends than D'Arcy Todd—a blessing for which he was profoundly thankful. In another letter, he wrote: "Indeed, as to friends, I have been wonderfully blessed; for, when I look back upon the time spent in this country, it appears to me that every one I have met has become a kind friend, and when I look within to see such unworthiness, it is really wonderful."

From this illness, by God's blessing, he recovered perfectly; and he returned with renewed zeal to his regimental duties. In his leisure hours he cultivated poetry and painting; but, after a while, he began to think that he might more profitably devote himself to the study of the native languages. "Having been nearly eight years in the country," he wrote in 1831, "without being on speaking terms with the natives, I have at last determined to conquer the languages." He had no very definite object in view; but he addressed himself most earnestly and assiduously to the work, and made considerable progress, especially in his study of Persian. And it was not long before his industry was amply rewarded. The weakness of Persia, and the manifest designs of more powerful (European) States, had suggested to the British Government the expediency of doing something to arrest what seemed to be the approaching downfall of her independence. So, in 1832-33, large supplies of arms and accoutrements were forwarded to the Shah for the use of his army; and, in the latter year, it was determined to send out a party of officers and non-commissioned officers to drill and discipline the Persian army. Among the officers selected for this duty was Lieutenant D'Arcy Todd, whose especial duty was said to be the instruction of the Persian gunners in the use and management of artillery, after the European fashion.

The appointment was gratifying to him in the extreme.

“I look upon it,” he wrote in April, 1833, “as a grand opening for the development of whatever may be within me. Is it not strange that I should have been studying Persian for the last twelve months, without any definite object in view? If I receive five or six hundred rupees a month, I shall think the situation well worth the trouble of travelling so far for it; but it is not the cash I think most about, it is a grand opening from the apathetic and dull routine of Indian life. There will probably be a good deal of fighting, and abundance of opportunity of displaying the stuff a man is made of. Oh! that Fred were to be my companion. Wonderful are the ways of Providence. In the morning we rise, and before evening our prospects, our hopes, our fears, receive new impulses and new features. What a scene is opening before me!”

1833.

A little while afterwards he wrote from Calcutta, saying: “The excitement caused by the first communication regarding my appointment to Persia is fast wearing away, and I am now able to view all matters connected therewith in a quiet, sober light; the glare of romance, the lightning flash of novelty, the bright gleams of warm anticipation, have all passed away, or rather have been softened down and mellowed by the pencillings of truth; the picture still remains in all its breadth and colouring. Lord William Bentinck is indifferent to the concerns of Persia, and takes but little interest in anything connected with that country. Time will show whether this be wise policy or not. Lieutenant Burnes, the traveller, a very intelligent and pleasant man, is living with Trevelyan,* at whose house I am now staying. He has lately travelled through Persia, and kindly gives me every information in his power.”

During five years D'Arcy Todd dwelt in Persia, instructing the Persian artillerymen in the details of his profession, and instructing himself in the politics of the country and the adjacent territories. The letters which he wrote to his brother, during this period, give an animated picture of his life in Persia. “The first news that greeted us on our arrival at Bushire,” he wrote in December, 1833, “was the intelligence

1833.
With the
Persian Army.

* Now Sir Charles Trevelyan, K.C.B.

1833—34. of Abbas Mirza's death. No official report has as yet been received here announcing this event, but it is everywhere believed, and is, I have no doubt, *true*—too true for us. There are three courses before us : we shall either retrace our steps to India (which people seem to think the most probable), or march to Tabreez *viâ* Shiraz and Ispahan, or re-embark for Bussora, and thence proceed by the way of Baghdad. . . . The country is in a dreadful state of disorder and insecurity, and we have, I think, but little prospect of prosecuting our journey through Persia without loss of property, if not of life. . . . Bushire is the most miserable-looking place that can possibly be conceived. From the harbour the view is almost pretty, but when you land, the marks of desolation, misery, and misrule, are visible on every spot. Plague and famine have depopulated the town : out of twenty thousand inhabitants, which it contained twelve months ago, there are not more than fifteen hundred remaining." In February, 1834, still writing from Bushire, he said : " At last we are on the eve of departure, and we hope to make our first march, of about a mile, this afternoon. . . . It is impossible to describe the annoyances of making a first march in Persia ; it is bad enough in India, but here, where the servants are few and bad, and the people independent, obstacles are thrown in the way at every step. . . . The expenses of travelling are enormous ; we have only been able to procure mules at double the usual rate of hire. Every servant *must* be mounted, and the expense of feeding animals on the road is more than they are worth. I have five horses, only two of which are for my own riding ; the others are for servants, who would not move an inch without being provided with a horse ! No man, woman, or child walks in Persia. I have only one horse of any value, but he is a beautiful creature, Ilderim by name, a Nedjee Arab of the Kohilan tribe. I gave for him three hundred dollars, equal to about six hundred and fifty rupees. I can depend upon him in the hour of need, and I do not regret the purchase. . . . Unless I receive compensation, I shall be ruined, and there are but faint hopes of our receiving anything beyond our five hundred, which will cover about half of our expenses in this country."

At the end of March he arrived at Teheran, and on the 24th

1834.

of April he wrote : “ We left Bushire on the 14th of February, and arrived here on the 28th of last month : this is my first opportunity of sending a letter, or you should have heard from me before. Our journey was anything but a pleasant one ; the mountains between Bushire and Shiraz were covered with snow, and the passes were difficult and dangerous ; however, a few mules and horses were our only casualties. We were often fifteen hours on horseback, with no rest and little food ; but the health and spirits of the detachment seemed to improve as we overcame our difficulties. . . . Since our arrival at Teheran we have had the honour of an audience with his Majesty the Shah-in-Shah, the centre of the Universe, &c. &c.—he appeared to be greatly pleased with the show we made, and from his royal lips fell all manner of kind and gracious words.” A month afterwards he wrote : “ The old King has lately had several severe attacks of illness, and it is more than probable that he will die suddenly. Great commotion in every city and town of Persia will be the immediate consequence. Last Sunday it was reported here that he was no more. The price of everything rose in half an hour. Some shops were plundered, and many were closed. We are obliged to lay in a store for men and cattle, for if the King *were* to die, nothing would be procurable for days. In the tumult, the English would not be molested—at least this is the impression, but as the populace, in their ignorance, fancy that we have innumerable chests of gold in our possession, I do not think it unlikely that they will attack the Envoy’s palace, round or in which most of us are residing ; we are therefore prepared for the worst. . . . I have found *one* in Persia with whom I can hold sweet converse on the things that belong to our everlasting peace. Dr. Riach has lately arrived from England with despatches, and he is to be attached to the Envoy in Persia. I find in him a delightful companion ; his heart is deeply imbued with religion, and I trust that whilst we are together we may be the means of strengthening and comforting each other. I felt very lonely before his arrival. There is scarcely one in the country with whom I have a thought or feeling in common. Suddenly and unexpectedly one has appeared.” In August he again wrote : “ I consider the Persian appointment as sheer humbug ; the climate is the

1834.

only desirable thing in the country. The people, especially the people about Government, are a lying, deceitful, procrastinating, faithless race, with whom to hold any communication can only be a source of disgust and disappointment. I would never have left Cawnpore had I known what I now know of the prospects of an officer in Persia." He had begun to discover that he was officially in a strange and anomalous position. He did not know what it was his duty to do, and the Persian authorities seemed reluctant to define the functions and responsibilities of the British officers. This perplexed and annoyed Todd and his comrades; and was for some time a frequent source of complaint.*

1835.
Death of
Futteh Ali.

But there was soon some stirring work to interest him. The King of Persia, Shah Futteh Ali, died, and then ensued, according to custom in those countries, all the troubles of succession. Todd's own account of the immediate effects of this event is of some historical interest. Writing on the 22nd of February, 1835, he said: "On the 23rd of October old Futteh Ali Shah breathed his last in the palace of Huftdust, at Ispahan; the event was unexpected, for, although the King had been for some years in an infirm state of health, his constitution seemed of late to rally in a wonderful manner, and it was thought that the taper, although flickering, would continue to shed its faint and feeble light for many a year. His favourite Queen, the Taj-ud-Dowlah (Crown of the State), was with him when he died; he had given audience in the morning to some nobles who were proceeding to Shiraz with a force, in order to oblige the Firman-Firma to pay up his arrears of revenue, and his last injunctions were that the money collected should be given

* The position of the English officers at the Persian head-quarters was always very embarrassing, as they were only recognised by the Persian Government in the quality of instructors, and were not allowed to interfere with the interior economy of the regiments to which they were attached, nor exercise any of the functions of command. In the provinces, however, the local governors, being independent of court influence, and caring little for the jealousies of the native commanders, sometimes conferred much more extensive powers on the British officers attached to their service; Major Farrant, for instance, having had full authority over the

cavalry corps at Zenjan, and Major Rawlinson having been placed in military command of the province of Kermanshah. In former times, Abbas Mirza had always placed the British officers in real command of his troops, and Majors Christie, Hart, and Lindsay, had thus often led the Persians to battle against the Russians; and in the same way, in 1835, the latter officer, who had now become Major-General Sir Henry Bethune, was entrusted by the Shah with full authority over the expeditionary force sent to the south of Persia; but these were exceptions to the general rule.

1835.

to satisfy the claims of the soldiery. This unusual act of justice and liberality was the last which Futteh Ali performed; he retired to the ante-room and fell into a quiet slumber, from which he never awoke. He had for many years past contemplated the approach of death, and had fixed upon the spot where his mortal remains should rest, within the precincts of the shrine of 'Fatimeh the Immaculate' (a sister of Imaum Reza, not Fatimeh, the daughter of Mohammed), whose mausoleum at Koom, next to that of her brother at Meshed, is considered the most holy place in Persia, and is the resort of multitudes of pious pilgrims, who enrich with their offerings the sanctuary and its attendant priests. Futteh Ali had, at the time of his death, the most valuable of his jewels with him; the great diamond, called from its splendour the 'durya-i-noor' (sea of light), placed in a casket at the foot of his bed, was the last object he beheld before his eyes closed in the sleep of death. The disorder which ensued when the frail thread which bound together the disorderly spirits about the royal camp was broken, may be imagined; the event was at first kept secret, but this could not last long; it was whispered in the palace, and in the course of a few hours the news of the King's death spread over the city. The disturbances which followed, and the events which occurred at this period in Ispahan, have been variously related."

"When," continued Todd, with more immediate reference to himself and his comrades, "the intelligence of Futteh Ali Shah's death reached Tabreez, the British detachment were encamped at the town of Khoi, eighty-eight miles north-west of Tabreez, employed in drilling four regiments of infantry and some artillery. We had been engaged in this duty for about a month, and had, in the first instance, formed a camp on the frontier of Turkey, near the Turkish frontier town of Byazeed. Mahomed Mirza, Abbas Mirza's eldest son, was immediately proclaimed at Tabreez King of Persia, by the name of *Mahomed Shah*, and our small force marched without loss of time to that place. Amongst a progeny of several hundred Princes, there were of course many competitors for the throne; and it was said that three, the Governor of Fars, the Governor of Mazanderan, and the Governor of Teheran, had each proclaimed himself king. We prepared for an immediate advance

1835.

upon the capital, notwithstanding the near approach of winter. Our Envoy had been authorised by Government to assist Mahomed Shah by every possible and available means. The new King's treasury was empty, but Sir John Campbell came forward with the requisite sum; warlike preparations went on with amazing rapidity; troops were assembled from all quarters; and in the course of a very short time after the intelligence of Futteh Ali's death reached Tabreez, a respectable force (for this country) of six regiments and twenty-four guns was put in motion towards the capital. In the mean time, we learnt with certainty that the Zil-i-Sultan, Prince Governor of Teheran, a man infamous for his vices and notorious for his weakness of mind, had declared himself King, and had placed the crown upon his head. The late King's treasury, said to be immense, and jewels, had fallen into his hands; and of the former he distributed large sums in military preparations to oppose the claims of his nephew. He did not, however, anticipate the active measures which had been taken in the north. We approached within five or six marches of Teheran without meeting with the slightest opposition: on the contrary, our numbers were augmented at every step. Mahomed Shah was everywhere acknowledged as King, and the chances of opposition seemed to diminish as we approached the capital. The Zil-i-Sultan was not, however, wholly inactive. A force of four or five thousand men, with seven guns and fifty swivels, was despatched against us, under the command of Imaum Verdee Mirza, one of the Zil's half-brothers. This force advanced boldly until it came within one march of our camp, and then retreated before us, keeping at the same respectful distance. After trifling for a few days in this manner, whilst we were advancing at the rate of fourteen or fifteen miles a day, Imaum Verdee Mirza deserted the cause of his brother, and came into our camp, his safety having been guaranteed by the Russian and English Envoys. His train of artillery, ammunition, swivels, &c., were given into our hands the next day; his cavalry swelled our numbers, and the rest of his followers dispersed! A second force, accompanied by a much larger train of artillery, advanced from the city, but gave themselves up without firing a shot. So much for Persian bravery! In the mean time, the Zil-i-Sultan was seized and

1835.

confined to his palace by one of the nobles in Teheran, and the gates of the city were thrown open to receive Mahomed Shah. We did not, however, enter the palace for some days: the astrologers could not fix upon an auspicious hour for the royal entry, and we therefore pitched our camp near the garden palace of Negaristan, in which the King took up his temporary abode. Thus ended our first bloodless campaign! In former days this farce would have been succeeded by a tragedy—heads would have been lopped off by the hundred, and eyes would have been plucked out by the bushel—*vide* Aga Mahomet's conduct fifty years ago: but the young King has behaved on the present occasion admirably; his late opponents have been dealt with in the most lenient manner, and many of them have in consequence become his staunch friends and supporters."

But there was still the old sore of which the English officer had so frequently complained. The Government of the Shah had assigned to him no well-defined position, and he did not clearly know the right character of his duties, or the full extent of his responsibilities. In a letter to his friend, Mr. Trevelyan, dated May 25, 1835, D'Arcy Todd clearly set forth all the difficulties he experienced. "I am the only officer," he wrote, "left at head-quarters with the Colonel, but my situation with the Artillery is exceedingly ill defined, and the duty I perform is disagreeable to myself, and of no benefit to the Government. In order to give you some idea of the difficulties which are to be overcome in getting the situation of a British officer defined by the Persian Government, I will extract a few pages from my journal, written after an interview with the Kaim-Makam, by which you will see how business is carried on in this part of the world. The extract will be a long one, but as it contains a sketch of the man by whom the destinies of Persia are at present swayed, I cannot help believing that it will not be altogether uninteresting to you: 'The Kaim-Makam has been for some time past promising to place me in a situation in which I might do something towards fulfilling the ends for which I came to this country. I have been detained at Teheran for the avowed purpose of being placed in command of the Artillery, but week after week, and month after month, has passed away, and I am

Difficulties of
his position.

1835.

at the present moment (March 18, 1835) precisely in the situation in which I found myself on my arrival at Teheran twelve months ago—*employed* in doing nothing. I went this morning with Colonel Pasmore and Dr. Riach to visit the Kaim-Makam, in order that something might, if possible, be defined, and that I might know whether it was the wish or intention of the Persian Government to assign me any employment or not. Although the minister himself had settled the time and place for our conference, we were by no means certain of finding him. The old fox has the greatest dislike to enter into any subject connected with business, and shuts himself up as carefully from the public gaze as the Grand Lama himself. Notwithstanding it is said that he is the best man of business in the country, when he gives his attention to the matter before him, there is perhaps no door in the world from which more disappointed suitors and deferred suits are turned away than the door of the Kaim-Makam. This minister is considered by the Persians as a man of first-rate ability and of sound judgment: he does not bear so high a character amongst those Europeans who, from intercourse with him, have had opportunities of forming a correct opinion of his merits; and it is said that in no public act of his life has he displayed the qualities which are ascribed to him by his countrymen. In balancing the two accounts, it is allowed that Mirza Abul Kasim possesses great natural ability, aided by an excellent memory, and that he is extensively acquainted with the literature of Persia; his cunning is that of the "*father of all foxes*," and his long career as a minister in the old Court, and under the heir-apparent, has given him a readiness in the despatch of business, when it pleases him, which would render him, if it were not neutralised by his laziness, one of the most useful and efficient ministers that Persia could have. His moral character is on a level with that of his countrymen—the most degraded of all degraded people. After some delay, and after traversing sundry long, dark, winding passages, we gained admittance to the ministerial den. We found him sitting in a corner with one of the Princes, apparently settling some business. His appearance was that of a man who had been drunk or asleep for a week, or stupified with excessive watching. As soon as the thickness of his vision permitted

1835.

him to recognise us, and his scattered senses gave him an inkling of our business, he made excuses to the Prince, and retired with us to another corner of his sanctum, half glad to escape the settlement of one affair, half sorry to be obliged to give his attention to another. The exterior of the Kaim-Makam is not prepossessing. He is a man of middling stature, very corpulent, with a countenance strongly indicative of his cunning small eyes, ill-formed nose, and the lower part of his face expressive of sensuality, the whole physiognomy set off by a ragged, scanty beard, and an ill-trimmed moustache. We had no sooner seated ourselves, and were expecting to enter upon business, than we were interrupted by a man who brought a large bundle of papers for the minister's seal; one by one they were thrust into his hand, and he looked over—I will not say *perused*—each, somewhat in the manner of a person examining a piece of paper to see whether it was clean or not. The Kaim-Makam's mode of looking over papers is peculiar. He takes the letter in one hand, keeping it open with his forefinger and thumb, and places the middle of it, where he knows the *mutlub* to commence, close to his right eye, and then gradually draws it up until he comes to the end of it: this does not occupy more than a few seconds; the paper is then thrown down, and he snuffles out an opinion, or a decision, or generally a cause for delaying the settlement of the affair. Ever and anon he was interrupted in this occupation by some message, or by some of his dependents whispering important intelligence in his ear: the interruption seemed to be a relief to him, and whilst one of his friends was thus communicating confidentially to him, he took the opportunity to wash himself. A small bottle, about the size of a vinegar-cruet, was brought filled with rose-water; a little of this was placed in the palm of his hand, and thence conveyed to his face and beard; the operation was repeated once or twice, and his morning ablutions were finished. In the mean time we were sitting, like Patience on a monument, watching for a favourable moment to thrust in a word or two on the subject of our own affairs; but whenever there appeared to be a chance of succeeding, some letter or message was brought, and we were thrown back into our first position. In the midst of this scene, a beautiful little child, about six

1835.

years old, was introduced, bearing a note. This was a son of Ali Nuckee Mirza, late Governor of Karbeen. The child walked up to the Kaim-Makam with all the gravity of a grey-beard, and presented his note, which was to complain that he had been stopped at the gate of the city by the sentinel stationed there, and to request that he might be permitted to go out of the city for the purpose of taking the air with his nurse. The child, being of royal blood, was of course placed in the highest seat, and the little fellow, when seated, returned the compliments which were paid him with the utmost propriety and decorum. No bearded child could have behaved himself better. The old Kaim-Makam pretended the greatest affection towards him, kissing and slobbering him over like a bear licking its whelp. The K. M. was not a little glad of having this excuse for neglecting business for a few minutes. Soon after the entrance of the child, a messenger arrived from the King, desiring the minister's immediate attendance upon his Majesty. Perhaps this was a manoeuvre on the part of the K. M. himself in order to get rid of the visitors and petitioners who had collected around him. The King's commands were, of course, to be obeyed, and after some time he got up, and, bowing to the grown-up Prince, who had sat all the while in his solitary corner, left the room, having appointed us a meeting in the Shubistan (a part of the palace) after he had waited on the King. Thus ended the first scene of our fruitless drama! When we thought we had given the Kaim-Makam time to settle his business with the King, we repaired to the Shubistan in search of the old fox. There we found him seated at his breakfast, and it was evident that he had not been near the royal presence. He was surrounded, as usual, by a host of people, some of them the principal officers of the Court, others his attendants and sycophants. Before him were two or three bowls, containing stewed feet and other dainties on which he was gorging. For full half an hour did the Prime Minister of Persia descant on the merits of stewed feet, the courtiers submissively chiming in with their oracle, and praising the dainties before him. Once or twice he put questions to Dr. R. on the important subject of stewed feet, inquiring whether they were wholesome, as he thrust them wholesale down his ungodly throat. He did not, however, gain much satisfactory informa-

1835.

tion on the point, and continued to lick, and pick, and chew, until he felt, like the boa-constrictor with the horns of an antelope sticking out of his jaws, that he had eaten enough. We found that there was no room for business in a mind stuffed with thoughts and recollections of stewed feet. Several times an attempt was made—after the breakfast was removed—to bring *our* subject on the *tapis*, but it invariably failed. The two Topshee-Bashees (commandants of artillery) had been sent for; one of them, Sohrab Khan, of the Irak Artillery, was present; the other, Hajee Iskunder Khan, of the Azerbaijan Artillery, had come, but had slunk away again when we entered the room. “That’s Todd Sahib, is it?” snivelled out the Kaim-Makam. “Todd Sahib, you must have charge of the Artillery, and you must drill them well. Sohrab Khan! you must attend to what Todd Sahib says to you; mind, you must be *very* particular. Todd Sahib! you must——” Here the oration was broken off by the entrance of somebody, or by some other subject presenting itself to the mind of the speaker; perhaps some fond recollection of stewed feet came across him at the moment. However, Todd Sahib and his concerns were consigned to oblivion. We trifled away about an hour in this manner. Every now and then there was a grunt about *Todd Sahib*, but it died away with a cough, or into a blow of the nose. At the end of an hour the K. M. appeared suddenly to remember that he had been called for by the King, and he accordingly rose to depart; but before leaving the room he came up to our party, and declared that everything should be settled. Todd Sahib was brought forward, and was asked what he wanted. I endeavoured to explain what degree of authority would enable me to carry on the duties of the Artillery, and disclaimed any wish to interfere with the peculiar authority of the two Topshee-Bashees in matters unconnected with drill and discipline. “Well, then,” said the Kaim-Makam, “Sohrab Khan, you are to attend to what Todd Sahib says to you; mind, you must be very particular.” I explained that, without a distinct and written order from the minister himself defining my situation, difficulties without number would present themselves at every step. “Tell me, then,” said the K. M.—“tell me exactly what things are to be under you, and what under the Topshee-Bashees.” The question was an

1835. embarrassing one, for this is the very point which is of all the most knotty. I said a few words, and the conversation then turned upon the nature and extent of Colonel P.'s authority over the Persians; this was also an intricate subject, and ended, after ten minutes' talk, where it began. At last it was arranged that Colonel Pasmore should draw up an order defining my situation, and that this should be submitted for the Kaim-Makam's approval. This was the result of our day's labour. The minister walked off to the King, and we were left not one step advanced since the morning.' "

Troubles of
Mahomed
Shah.

Shortly after the accession of Mahomed Shah to the throne of Persia, the Prime Minister was seized by order of the King, and put to death. One of the many rumours assigned for this summary proceeding was that the Minister had been in correspondence with Russian Agents respecting a scheme for the overthrow of the Shah's Government. Groundless or not, his suspicions would not suffer his Majesty to feel secure on his throne. To strengthen his position, he banished from Teheran to Azerbaijan all the sons and grandsons of Futteh Ali Shah, thus diminishing the number of probable intriguers. The outbreak of cholera at the capital followed closely on these events, and the Court with the army were removed to a village on the slope of the mountains which separate Irak from Mazanderan. Here the Persian Commandant of Artillery died of the pestilence which was raging. "When the King heard of his death," wrote Todd in a letter to his brother, dated Teheran, 31st July, 1835, "he sent me a *firman*, placing the control of all matters connected with the Artillery in my hands, until a Persian 'fit for the situation' should be appointed. He will have to wait some time before he finds such a person. If a man like the late Commandant is appointed, I shall give up all hopes of making myself useful in my profession so long as I remain in the country." On the general subject of the cholera, Todd had written a few days before: "The cholera is a new disease in this country, and the alarm which it creates, from the fatal rapidity of its effects, is scarcely less than that which is felt on the approach of the plague. The people fled with one accord from the infected spot. Men with their wives and children and effects were seen scattered over the plain, hurrying away, like the family of the patriarch's nephew,

from the doomed city. The King, with the officers of his Court, were amongst the first who fled. His example was followed by multitudes, and in the course of a few days the city was literally emptied of its inhabitants. But the disease followed in their track, and in every village and encampment in the vicinity of Teheran hundreds daily fell victims to its ravages. The King at first established his Court at a village about eight miles from the city, delightfully situated on the slope of the mountains which separate Irak from Mazanderan. He soon collected round him a host of people, civil and military, and his crowded encampment threatened to become as infected as the place from which he had fled. A number of fatal cases appeared in the circle of his immediate attendants, and he became alarmed for his own safety. I joined him with the Artillery on the 3rd of the present month; the next day he directed the troops to separate, and a few days afterwards went himself with only a few attendants to a small village, at some distance higher up in the mountains, where he has remained ever since. I selected what I deemed a healthy spot for the Artillery encampment, and I thank God that for the last two-and-twenty days we have not had a single case of cholera."

But better prospects were now opening out before him. Mr. Henry Ellis was appointed, for the third time, British Ambassador at the Court at Teheran. He soon perceived that D'Arcy Todd had capacities which required a wider sphere for their full development than the military routine work on which he was engaged; and he determined, therefore, to employ him in the diplomatic service, as soon as a fitting opportunity should arrive. On the 5th of January, 1836, Todd wrote to his brother, saying: "Since the day of Mr. Ellis's arrival he has kept our pens and brains constantly at work. I have written some quires of foolscap during the last three months, in the shape of memoranda, memoirs, plans, and public letters on the subject of the employment of the British detachment, and the improvement of the Persian army. My pen has done me good service, as you will learn by the sequel. My tongue also has not been wanting. I shall now throw off all affectation of modesty, for I am writing to old Fred, and give you an idea of my standing in

Diplomatic
employment.

1836.

the opinion of Mr. Ellis. I had from time to time received hints of the satisfaction which the Ambassador invariably expressed with my communications on the subject of Persia, both written and verbal. You will understand this when I tell you that the Acting Secretary of Legation, Dr. Riach, is my very particular friend. A few days ago, his Excellency summoned me into the Palace Garden, and informed me that he had at length come to the conclusion that our connexion with Persia was worse than useless, that Afghanistan was the field for our exertions, that we should connect ourselves closely with that country, that he had written a letter to Lord Auckland, his intimate friend, strongly pressing the necessity of sending a Political Agent to be stationed at Caubul, and recommending no greater or no less a personage than your little brother, Elliott D'Arcy, as an officer whose, &c. &c., eminently fitted him for that important situation! The announcement, as you may imagine, astounded me. I will pass over the flattering sensations which fluttered through the crimson piece of flesh under my left ribs. I looked the Ambassador full in the face, and when I found that he was not joking, I stammered out a few lame expressions of the gratification which I felt at finding that I had attained so high a place in his good opinion. What think you, Master Fred, of my being *Political Agent* in Caubul? I do not, of course, expect that the prospect which has been thus opened upon me will be realised. Better interest and higher talents will be in the field against me, but I feel certain that Mr. Ellis's recommendation will be of service to me, and that I shall not have to return to regimental duty on my leaving Persia. One of the papers which gave so much satisfaction to Mr. Ellis was a lengthy article of fifty pages on Burnes's Military Memoir on the countries between the Caspian and the Indus, in which I took the liberty to handle somewhat roughly the opinions and reasoning of the intelligent and enterprising 'traveller.' A few evenings ago, Mr. Ellis. desired me to draw up a paper on the subject which he might send to England as a despatch. These golden opinions are worth something; but I am tired of writing about myself, my affairs, and my prospects." But in the early part of the month of May, Mr. Ellis returned to England, and for some few

1886.

months after his departure Todd was re-employed on the not very congenial work of drilling the Persian Artillery.* Two months passed away, and the 8th of July he wrote to his brother, saying: "I have heard nothing yet of the effect of Mr. Ellis's letter in my favour to Lord Auckland. You remember the subject—Afghanistan! I am sick of Persia, and long to be released from the thralldom of my present situation. Should the Company agree to the pensions for length of service—180*l.* after twenty years—what say you to our joining pensions, and settling down as two old bachelors in some quiet part of England, or making a location in Van Diemen's Land or the Canadas? If God spares my life, I shall lay down my sword with the most heartfelt satisfaction at being able to leave a trade which I detest."

In the autumn of this year, 1836, Todd was residing at Tabreez, in the capacity of Military Secretary to General Bethune, who then commanded the legions disciplined by the English officers. "My last was dated Teheran, October 4th," he wrote on the 24th of November, "since which time I have transferred my body to the delightful capital of Azerbizan. . . . We have a large society here for Persia. . . . We have, besides others, Major-General Bethune, who has appointed me, as I think I have mentioned, his Military Secretary." On Christmas-day he wrote again, saying: "I have just been ordered by the Ambassador to undertake a difficult and somewhat dangerous journey into one of the wildest parts of Persia, on my way to Teheran. I hope to leave Tabreez the day after to-morrow, and shall not arrive at the capital in less than fifty days. My journey is an honourable one, and, if carried through, will bring me to the notice of Government. Mr. M'Neill's choice of me for this journey is not a little flattering. . . . My route will be *viâ* Ardebeel, the shores of the Caspian, Ghilan, and Roodbar, to Kazveen, where I come

Travelling in
Persia.

* In the following extract from a letter written some years afterwards by Todd to James Outram, one feature of artillery practice in Persia is amusingly represented: "This reminds me of an answer given to me by Mahomed Shah's Wuzeer—one Meerza Mahomed, a great oaf. I had been superintending some artillery practice at Teheran. A jackass

having been placed as the target, I remonstrated against the cruelty of putting up one of God's creatures as a mark, when wood or canvas would answer every purpose. The Wuzeer replied: 'On my eyes be it! I will stick up a pony next time!' As if I had specially pleaded the case of jackasses!"

1837.

into the main road. One of the dangers of the trip is the plague raging in the vicinity of Ardebeel, but I trust that God will protect me." In the third week of February he reached the capital, and wrote thence on the 3rd of March: "I left Tabreez on the 27th of December, and proceeded through Karadagh and the fine district of Mishkeen to Ardebeel. This place is celebrated as being the cradle of the Suffavean dynasty, and the tomb of some of its monarchs. It was once a place of pilgrimage. The tombs of Sheikh Suffee-ud-Deen, of Sultan Hyder, and of Shah Ismael, were once contained in a magnificent shrine, at which thousands of pilgrims came to pay their devotions, and upon which millions were spent in honour of the departed saints and heroes, the glory of Persia, as they are now the reproach. Time, and neglect, and violence have done their worst upon the resting-place of the Suffees. Little remains of the dwelling of the dead save the earth in whose bosom they are sleeping. The buildings and courts must have been of immense extent, from the gateways, which, though reft of their beauty, have not yet mingled with the dust. One of these, at a considerable distance from the present entrance, still displays, in the style of its architecture and the colour of its ornaments, the taste and skill of its architect. A wretched court-yard, surrounded by ruins, and filled with hundreds of nameless tombs, leads to the sanctuary. Three domes of different size and shape cover what remains of the tombs of the Suffees. A large hall, which still retains evidence of the richness of its former decorations, is the vestibule of some small inner chambers which contain the ashes of Suffee, Hyder, and Ismael. They were once concealed by gold and silver screens, which have been borrowed by succeeding monarchs, or stolen by unbelieving visitants. Everything about the place breathes of wretchedness and neglect. One of the domes covers what must once have been a magnificent apartment, round the walls of which were arranged the vessels of china used by the Suffavean monarchs, or presented as offerings to the shrine. A remnant, about a hundred, of these occupy the centre of the apartment, and bear the marks of antiquity, and of being the genuine manufacture of China. The library, once filled with the rarest and most valuable books, has shared the fate of the building. Few remain, and those few but of little value. The

1837.

Russians, when they visited Ardebeel, took away a great number for the purpose of translation, under the promise of returning them, but the promise remains yet unfulfilled. The town of Ardebeel tells the usual Persian tale of decay, and dirt, and depopulation. The plague has raged there during the last two years: half of the inhabitants have been swept off, and the remainder look squalid and wretched. Ardebeel is, at present, the royal prison-house. Twelve of the sons and grandsons of Futteh Ali Shah are confined in the fortress, which was constructed some years ago, after the European system, by Colonel Monteith. Amongst the prisoners are the Zil-i-Sultan, who placed himself upon the throne at Teheran after the death of the late King, and Hussan Ali Mirza, the blinded brother of the late Firman-Firma of Shiraz. The prisoners are tolerably comfortable in their cages, so far as food and clothing are concerned, and they may thank their stars that they wear their heads upon their shoulders, for had any other Kajjar than Mahomed Shah been upon the throne, they would, long ere this, have gone the way of all rebellious or ambitious Persian Princes. I stayed nearly a fortnight at Ardebeel, being detained by a constant succession of snow-storms, during which it was impossible to move. The weather was dreadfully cold, the thermometer falling at night below zero, but I did not, on the whole, pass an unpleasant fortnight. I was the guest of the Prince-Governor, a very nice little boy, brother to the King, and was treated with the greatest kindness and hospitality. From Ardebeel I proceeded to Adina Bazaar, near the plains of Mogan, skirting in my way the whole of the Russian frontier, and returned by nearly the same route to the village of Nameen (near Ardebeel), thence, after crossing the range of mountains to the eastward of Ardebeel, I followed the course of the Astara river to its embouchure. From Astara to Enzellee, my route for four days was on the shore of the Caspian, the waters of which wetted my horse's feet nearly the whole of the time. On my right were the fine forest-clad hills of Talish, which stretch down to the very edge of the sea. The scenery was most picturesque, as you may suppose, for mountains, and forests, and sea, will always, when united, form the picturesque. I had not time for sketching, save here and there when something remarkable presented itself.

1837.

One of the finest objects on my route was the mountain of Sevalan, twenty miles to the west of Ardebeel. Its height is about twelve thousand feet above the level of the sea, and it stands upon a base which, at the distance of twenty miles, embraces a third of the circle. The body of a saint, who is supposed to have lived prior to the Mahomedan invasion, is to be seen on the summit of the mountain in a wonderful state of preservation, and the spot is a place of pilgrimage. We have some fine mountains in Persia and its vicinity, but few to be compared with the hoary peak of Sevalan. The province of Ghilan is similar, in its climate and scenery, to Mazanderan, of which I gave you a description last year. I visited Ghilan in the most favourable season, and did not suffer from the effects of its climate, which, in summer and autumn, is deadly, from the prevalence of marsh fevers. It deserves its name, which is a compound of Gil (mud), the whole country being one great marsh. There are no made roads, in consequence of the wise Persians fearing that constructing a highway would facilitate the advance of a Russian force. One was commenced between Resht and the sea-coast, but, before two miles had been completed, peremptory orders arrived from Teheran to stop the work. I never knew what mud was before my visit to Ghilan. The pathways which are intended to connect the villages run through mulberry-forests and rice-fields, the mud, which is the soil of the country, being two or three feet deep, and often fathomless. The ponies of the province are the only animals that can flounder effectually through this fifth element; all other quadrupeds fairly give in, and refuse to move after wading through a mile or two. Ghilan is the richest province comparatively in Persia, being one large silk garden, and it might be made to yield, without oppressing the people, an immense revenue; but a bad Government has well seconded the efforts of plague and cholera to destroy this really fine country, and Ghilan is in the same depopulated and disorganised state as the rest of Persia. Between Resht and Kazveen (where I came upon the high road between Teheran and Tabreez), I passed over a range of mountains covered with snow from four to forty feet deep. You will set me down as a Munchausen, but really the snow was very deep, and I was eight hours in riding eight miles through it. I arrived at this

place on the 18th of last month, and have ever since been fully employed in writing reports, mapping, &c. I have no plans for the future, and know not where I shall spend my summer."

1837.

The year 1837 saw him still resident at Teheran, in his military capacity; but he was steadily preparing himself all the time for employment in the political branch of the service, and at last the opportunity came. The following extracts from the correspondence of this year carry on the story of his life: "Teheran, September 3, 1837. By-the-by, you will have seen, ere this, that his Majesty has conferred the local brevet of major on the officers serving in Persia. We receive no increase of pay, but as formerly all the officers who were made local field-officers in Persia were paid as such, we are about to address a memorial upon the subject to the authorities in India. This local rank is not of much use, but there is something in a name, notwithstanding what the Bard of Avon has said regarding it. There is a possibility, although remote, that 'I may be sent to England on duty.' I shall do my best, you may be sure, to effect this, for although I could not remain at home more than a few months, I feel that it would be of great service to me in every respect, and the prospect of embracing you under such happy circumstances is indeed delightful. You will be glad to hear that I have received a complimentary letter from Lord Palmerston, in consequence of my reports regarding the frontier. I have sent home lately some other maps and papers which may be of use to me." "Teheran, December 26. The Secretary of Legation, Colonel Sheil, has gone home with despatches, and will be absent probably nearly a year. You will be glad to hear that Mr. M'Neill has appointed me to act for him, and has done so in a very flattering manner, as you will perceive in perusing the copy of his letter to me on the occasion, which I have sent to our beloved mother. The appointment will not give me anything in a pecuniary point of view; indeed, it is possible that I may lose my Persian allowances whilst employed with the Mission; but you must be aware that the honour of the thing is great, and that my being selected for such a situation *may* be of great use to me in my future prospects. My great ambition is to have *political* employment, either in India or in

Secretary of
Legation.

1837—38. these countries, and I have now made the first step towards my aim and object." This new appointment gave him abundant occupation. After some two or three months' experience of its duties, he wrote to his brother, saying: "This Acting Secretaryship of Legation is no sinecure. The other day I wrote forty-eight pages, foolscap, of Persian translations, and had time for my ordinary reading, French and English. Now I call that a good day's work. What say you? I have now twenty long letters before me, and heaps of Persian papers for translation, and all this must be done within the next four days, and French lessons and walking exercise must not be discontinued. Read Lockhart's *Life of Sir Walter Scott*, and then grumble at want of time, if you dare. So you believed the story of the Epic poem! Fancy a Secretary of Legation writing an Epic! Why, I should be turned out before I could look round me. I must confess, in your private ear, that there are some loose scribbled sheets between the leaves of my blotting-book, but they look very little like poetry in their present state."

The siege of
Herat.

The next year found the Persian Government and the Persian army busied with the siege of Herat, and on the 8th of March Todd wrote with reference to that event, and to the views held by the British Government, that the possession of Herat by Persia would make a dangerous opening for Russian intrigue in the direction of India: "This is a strange country! A country inhabited or peopled by wandering tribes, who infuse their errant spirit into every living thing that sets the sole of its foot within the territories of the Great King. From this exordium you will conclude that I am flapping or pluming my wings for a flight, and thou art right, my most sapient Fred. The month of March being under the sign Pisces, the finny tribe, both great and small, are preparing for migration to hotter or colder climates, and I, being an odd fish, must follow in the track of my betters. I might here give you an appropriate sketch of the system pursued by the several tribes—Toorks, Turcomans, and Kuzzilbashes—of these parts, but you will be in a hurry to know where I am going. Perhaps to England, you will say to yourself; but you are out there. Guess again; but I see it's of no use. . . . On the frontier between Persia and

1838.

Afghanistan lieth the city of Herat, a place which for centuries past has been a bone of contention between the two States. Mahomed Shah, immediately on coming to the throne, declared his intention of marching against the place, which he asserted belonged to Persia, and was now in rebellion against its lawful sovereign, his royal self. In 1836 he made a campaign to the eastward, but the cholera and the Turcomans obliged him to return to his capital, without having effected his object. Last year he collected a large army, and went on the same errand. The fortress of Ghorian was delivered into his hands after a ten days' siege, and on the 21st of November—I like to be particular—he sat down before Herat. The Heratees gave him a warm reception, making nightly sorties, in each of which the Persians lost six to a dozen men, and sending out large parties of horse to intercept supplies, carry off stragglers, &c. The walls proved tougher than his Majesty had anticipated, and after expending ten or twelve thousand shot and shells without producing the slightest effect, the siege was turned into an imperfect blockade, two of the five gates of the town being open, and the inhabitants holding free and uninterrupted communication with the surrounding country, whilst the Shah was shut up in his camp, round which a wall had been built. In this stage of the proceedings our Government suddenly discovers that the fall of Herat into the hands of the Persians would be injurious to our interests in the East, as affording an outpost to Russian intrigue in the direction of India. The wiseacres might have made the discovery ages ago, for the subject was pretty often dinned into their ears; but no, they go to sleep, and allow things to proceed to extremities until the eleventh hour. However, they have at last bestirred themselves, and Mr. M'Neill is about to proceed to the scene of operations, to mediate between the contending powers, and to put a stop, if possible, to further hostilities. The whole of the orchestra will not accompany the leader of the band, but the acting second fiddle must, of course, be in attendance, and I am preparing to start from this in about four days, with Mr. M'Neill and Major Farrant, who is acting as his private scratchitary. We take four sergeants and fifteen or twenty Persians, armed and mounted, in case we should meet with some of the roving

1838.

bands of Turcomans who infest the road between Shahrood and Herat. As I have no hankering after a pastoral life, I hope that you will not next hear of me, or from me, tending the flocks and herds of the Turcomans. They sold Joseph Wolff for a greyhound pup and five rupees, but his teeth were the worse for wear, whereas mine are as sound as a four-year-old's, and I fear they would ask for me a heavier ransom. The journey ought not to occupy more than twenty-five days. The weather is delicious, and, barring the Turcomans, I look forward to a very pleasant and interesting trip. And now for a word in your ear. Should Mr. M. wish to communicate with Lord Auckland, who is now in the North of India, it is possible that I may be sent across with despatches, and then—*then*. O Fred the magnanimous! what countries shall I not see? Look at the map again, and tell me whether you would not like to be with me; but first read, if you have not read them, Burnes's *Travels*, Arthur Conolly's *Journey Overland to India*; a dear friend of mine is that said Arthur Conolly, now a sincere Christian, and one with whom I have had much sweet fellowship;* Elphinstone's *Caubul*, and Forster's *Travels*, 1798. I should also, for many reasons which must be apparent to you, much like to see Lord Auckland, and I could not do so under better auspices than as the bearer of despatches, and I may say (though I say it myself), as the possessor of some information that would be useful to him. But all this may be a castle in the air; but I am, and ever have been, fond of constructing *châteaux en Espagne*. This move was only determined on yesterday, but I find that I should have had a journey at any rate, for Mr. M'Neill tells me that he had intended sending me to Herat, to endeavour to bring the Shah to reason, but that the day before yesterday he received letters from India, which made him decide on going himself. Diplomacy is a strange trade, Fred, but, the more I see and understand of it, the more I like it, for the machinery is of sufficient interest to one behind the scenes, and our policy certainly tends to the amelioration of the state of uncivilised man, at least in this part of the world, although our object is certainly of a different stamp." "March 10th. We

* I cannot trace in the correspondence of either the place where they met. It was at some up-country station—probably Cawnpore.

1838.

start this afternoon, and I am in the midst of preparations for the march. You have seen the first day of a march in India, and can fancy the present state of things around me. Packing and paying! Ducats and tomauns galloping off by hundreds. Pistols, swords, guns, ammunition-belts, &c., in beautiful confusion around me, with a fine background of half-packed boxes, duns, and omeedwars! I cannot—how can I?—collect my senses for a rational letter, so you must just take what you can get, and be thankful. I must defer writing to our dear mother until I am on the journey, and we shall despatch messengers to Teheran constantly.”

Of the march to Herat, and of the first investment of that place, Todd's letters give an animated description. He tells the story from without the walls, as Eldred Pottinger tells it from within; and it is curious to note that two officers of the Indian Artillery—one from Bengal and the other from Bombay—were at the same time in the camps of the two contending forces: “We arrived without let or hindrance on the 6th,” wrote Todd on the 11th of April, “having accomplished the journey—seven hundred miles—in twenty-six days. You have some idea of the country we passed through, and being well acquainted with the rate of marching in India, will, I think, give us credit for our expedition. We had sixty laden mules with us throughout the journey, and for the last four or five marches were accompanied by a train of five or six hundred camels, bringing provisions to camp. We only made one halt, and that was chiefly in consequence of the indisposition of the Elchee. Our last march into camp from Ghorian was forty miles, and we had several other tough ones of thirty-two, thirty-six, forty, and fifty; but our cattle behaved well, and, with the exception of a few horses left on the road, dead or dead lame, we effected our advance without loss. I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed the journey; the weather was delightful, and the country was new to me, in some parts unexplored by Europeans. I have mapped the whole route carefully, and shall send the result of my labours through Mr. M'Neill to the Foreign Office, having received encouragement from that quarter as an inducement to my exertions in improving the geography of this part of the world. I believe I have mentioned to you

1838. that my sketches of Mazanderan, Ghilan, and the Russian frontier, were approved of by Lord Palmerston, and lithographed at the Quartermaster-General's office. We did not come by the way of Meshed, but striking off the high road at Mezenoon, one march beyond Abbassabad, passed through the hills of Gomeesh to Toorsheez, and thence, leaving Toorbut Hyderee to the north, to Khaff, or rather Rovee, there being no such town as Khaff, which is the name of a district. From Rovee to Ghorian, a distance of ninety miles, there is no habitation, and water (brackish) only in one or two places. I have been astounded by the fertility and capability of some of the tracts of country we have passed over. Nothing can be finer than the plains and valleys between Toorsheez and Khaff; and the valley of the Herirood, between Ghorian and Herat, is one of the richest in the world. Innumerable villages, now indeed ruined, but still attesting the fertility of the soil, are seen as far as the eye can reach, scattered over a plain of vast extent, every foot of which bears the mark of cultivation." "Well, here we are," continued Todd, "encamped within two thousand two hundred yards of Herat. Nothing that I had previously heard gave me the slightest idea of the strength of the place, which, if defended by artillery, I should pronounce impregnable to a Persian army. It has now held out for five months, and the Shah does not appear to have advanced one step towards gaining possession of the place. His batteries have knocked off some of the upper defences, but no attempt has been made to effect a breach, which, indeed, it would be difficult to do with brass twelves and sixes; and although an assault by escalade is talked of, there seems to be no chance of the place falling, unless a famine should oblige the besieged to surrender, and this is not very likely, as the Heratees have laid in provisions for two years! The place is invested at last; but until within the last month three out of the five gates of the town were open, and the inhabitants enjoyed free and uninterrupted communication with the surrounding country. Our visit to the scene of operations gave great offence to the Shah, who did all in his power, but without effect, to prevent our reaching camp, knowing that Mr. M'Neill's only object could be to induce him, by promises or threats, to raise the siege. Our re-

1838.

ception in camp was cold in the extreme, all the usual compliments and civilities were omitted, and a hint was given that any Persian who visited the English would be a marked man. We, consequently, found ourselves in quarantine! A day or two after our arrival, however, Mr. M'Neill demanded an audience, to present a letter from Queen Victoria. This could not be refused, and we were ushered into the presence in style. On this occasion Mr. M'Neill's talents and wonderful knowledge of the Persians carried the day; the Shah was relieved from his fears for the moment, as the topic of Herat was not introduced, and when we took our leave he had been talked into good humour. Thus the ice has been partly broken; and although our Persian friends still keep aloof, from fear of the Shah's displeasure, the road to friendly communication has been opened. I have no hopes that the Shah will be induced to raise the siege by fair words on our part, but it is yet to be seen whether he will risk the chance of going to war with us, by obstinately persisting in his present plans of Eastern conquest. I am more than ever satisfied of the importance of keeping him within his present boundary, and of preventing his taking possession of Herat. Russia is already at work in Afghanistan. Our Government has been for many years fast asleep, and unless we now take some decided steps to arrest the advance of Russian intrigue towards the Indus, we shall awake, when too late, to find the paw of the Northern bear upon our shoulder. Having seen Herat, and the country in its vicinity, I can understand its being called the "key of India." The Shah's camp is a filthy nest of all possible abominations, so we have pitched our tents at some little distance from it, on a rising ground in the vicinity, from whence we have a fine view of the fortress. There is no fear of our being molested by the Afghans, who are here called the enemy; but I am not so sure of the rabble surbaz, who are in a wretched state from want of provisions, and are maddened by the opposition they have met with. There is little firing from either side, but the trenches are occasionally attacked, and the Persians are always the sufferers; the average daily loss on the part of the besiegers may not be more than five or six men. You must excuse my writing more in detail at present; some of my reasons must be ap-

1838.

parent to you, when I mention that my letter may fall into the hands of the Philistines before reaching you."

In the Memoir of Eldred Pottinger all the circumstances of the siege of Herat have been so fully set forth, that I need not again recite them. During a part of the time occupied by the investment of the place, Todd was in the Persian camp; and he was employed by the English Minister, Mr. M'Neill, to negotiate with the Heratees. He was the first English officer who had ever been seen by them in full regimentals, and it is recorded of him that when he entered the city "a vast crowd went out to gaze at him. The tight-fitting coat, the glittering epaulettes, and the cocked-hat, all excited unbounded admiration. The narrow streets were crowded, and the house-tops were swarming with curious spectators. The bearer as he was of a message from Mahomed Shah, announcing that the Persian sovereign was willing to accept the mediation of the British Government, he was received with becoming courtesy by Shah Kamran, who, after the interview, took the cloak from his own shoulders, and sent it by the Wuzeer to Major Todd, as a mark of the highest distinction he could confer upon him." "I was sent into the town," wrote Todd himself, "by Mr. M'Neill, with the permission of the Shah, to endeavour to open negotiations. I found the Herat Government willing to listen to anything that the British Minister might propose, and to him they gave full authority to act as mediator; but the Persians have been playing their usual dirty game, shuffling and shirking, and eating their own words, so that at present there seems to be but little probability of matters being satisfactorily arranged. Curious reports have been afloat of armies marching from the eastward to the assistance of the Heratees, and in consequence of these reports the Persians have from time to time seemed anxious to put an end to the business by entering into an equitable treaty; but no dependence can be placed on their words, and the Shah still lingers here, in the hope of starving out the besieged. I believe he has given up all expectation of taking it by storm; his batteries have failed to effect a practicable breach, and his soldiers have lost even the little heart they had at the commencement of the siege. I could not have believed it possible for him to subsist an

army of at least thirty-five thousand men for six months before this place; but he has done so somehow or other, and he may be able to procure provisions for some time longer. Even the amazing fertility of this country does not explain the mystery of how and whence these provisions are procured. In the mean time, our Government appears to have folded its arms over its breast in quiet or stupid indifference to the fate of the key of India."

1838.

The attempted negotiation failed; and the siege was continued. Soon afterwards, D'Arcy Todd was sent by Mr. M'Neill to convey despatches to the Governor-General of India, and to inform him more fully than written documents could what was the actual condition of affairs. "I am now under sailing orders," he wrote on the 8th of May, "and I shall weigh anchor in the course of a few days, charged with despatches for Lord Auckland. I hope to find his Lordship at Simlah, which will shorten the Indian part of my trip considerably. The route which I now contemplate is that which leads through Candahar, Caubul, Peshawur, Attock, and thence through the Punjab to Loodianah, whence Simlah is distant only a night's or a couple of nights' dâk (tappâl). I shall travel as an Englishman, but in the dress of an Afghan, without luggage or other encumbrances, save a pair of saddle-bags on the horse I ride. This mode I believe to be the best in every respect. All the difficulties that Europeans have encountered in these countries have arisen from their foolishly endeavouring to personate natives. The success they have met with in this has generally been about as great as Chinamen would meet with in attempting to personate Englishmen on the strength of a tight pair of breeches! We are now pretty well known in Afghanistan. Burnes is at Caubul, Leech (an Engineer officer) at Candahar, and Pottinger, of the Bombay Artillery, has been in Herat for the last eight months. With Runjeet our relations are becoming every day more intimate, and in his country an European is hailed as a friend. I do not, of course, expect to accomplish the journey before me without encountering difficulties, and perhaps some dangers; but these are to be met with in all

Service in
Afghanistan.

1838. the various paths of life, and are only to be overcome by a judicious use of the means which may be placed within our reach by the Sovereign disposer of events. The only question to be considered in danger or difficulty is, are we in the path of duty? If this can be answered satisfactorily, we can have no ground for apprehension. I have often described Simlah to you. A thousand associations are connected with it in my mind, and I look forward with varied feelings to revisiting scenes in which I have spent some of the happiest moments of my life. The circumstances under which I shall revisit these scenes will be somewhat altered, for I feel that I have almost lived a life during the last eight years, and that the days of youth are numbered with the past. This is, perhaps, a melancholy reflection, but it is a wholesome one; but I will not now follow it out in all its bearings. I have had a good deal of fagging work at this place, both mental and bodily, and my health has not been so good as usual. A disagreeable attack of dysentery kept me very low for some days, but I have now nearly regained my former strength; indeed, I am better than ever. I have reason to thank God that this attack occurred when medical assistance was within reach. I am, however, myself half a doctor, having been thrown of late years so much on my own resources. In Persia a man is most helpless unless he has some knowledge of the use of medicines, and I have been obliged to take my degree. I am afraid to enter into the subject of Herat and its affairs, or I shall have to write a folio, and you may not feel interested one straw in the matter. Suffice it to say that the Heratees still hold out most gallantly, making sorties nearly every night, and never failing in their object. On these occasions the Persians are invariably the sufferers, and it is believed that several of their guns have been carried off from their batteries and upset into the ditch, the Afghans not being able to drag them into the town. I mentioned in my last that I thought the place a strong one, but I had no idea of its real strength until I had an opportunity of examining the defences."

The Governor-General and his Secretaries, at this time, were at Simlah. There Todd met Lord Auckland, who saw at once that in the approaching struggle in Afghanistan, the young

Artillery officer was a man whose services might be turned to good account. "I left the Persian camp before Herat on the 22nd of May," he wrote to his brother, from the hill-station, in July, "and after a very interesting journey of about sixty days, *viâ* Candahar, Caubul, Peshawur, and the Punjab, I arrived without accident at this place on Friday last, the 20th. People tell me that I have made a very rapid journey—a fact with which I am pretty well acquainted, knowing, as I do, the difficulties and detentions and dangers which a traveller must meet with in the countries which I have lately traversed. I find that I have arrived here in the very nick of time. The attention of all men in India has been directed to the state of affairs in the countries between the Indus and the Caspian, and I have been able to lay before Government my stock of information. A rupture with Persia seems to be unavoidable, and we are, at last, about to establish our influence in Afghanistan on a solid, and what will, I believe, be a lasting basis. Shah Soojah, the ex-King of Caubul, who has for many years past been our pensioner at Loodianah, is to be reinstated in the kingdom by us, and as the measure is considered of great importance to our interests, we are 'to go the whole hog,' and ensure its complete success by every means in our power. I cannot now enter into particulars. . . . Lord Auckland has asked me to enlist, and as I do not see any prospect of returning to Persia under existing circumstances, I have accepted the offer, but I know not in what capacity I shall be employed. I am not even aware whether civil or military duties will be allotted to me. I trust the former, as I am heartily sick of drilling recruits." In August, he wrote again on the same subject, saying: "You will be anxious to know what are my plans for the future. I have given up all idea of returning to Persia; indeed, it seems probable that our mission and detachment have left that country ere this, for by the letters received to-day, I learn that Mr. M'Neill had left the Persian camp before Herat, and was at Meshed on the 26th of June, on his way to Teheran. A rupture had taken place with the Persian Government, and our Envoy withdrew from camp with the intention of quitting the country. I might have had the command of Shah Soojah's Artillery (1000 rupees per mensem),

1838.

or the Brigade Majorship of our own Artillery (two troops and three companies) going with the expedition; but military glory has lost its charms for me, and I have adhered to the intention, expressed in my last to you, of obtaining, if possible, an appointment in the Political Department. I believe that Mr. Macnaghten will go as the chief political character, with several assistants, of whom Burnes will be the first, and your humble servant the second. This is all I know about it. My allowances will, I fancy, be about 1000 rupees per mensem, perhaps something less, but this I care little about; the department is a good one—indeed, the best in India—and if a man exerts himself he must get up the tree.”

1839.

So when the famous Simlah Manifesto of October 1, 1838, published to the world a declaration of war against the *de facto* rulers of Afghanistan, and the official arrangements for the conduct of the Caubul Mission were completed, Captain D'Arcy Todd was gazetted as Political Assistant and Military Secretary to the Envoy and Minister at the Court of Shah Soojah, the restored King of Caubul. His letters, written on the march with Shah Soojah's camp, and after his arrival at the frontier city, afford a lively idea of the feelings with which he regarded the opportunity before him. “Larkhana, Upper Sindh, March 11, 1839. You can have no conception of the state of worry, annoyance, and fatigue in which I was kept during our march of five hundred miles to Shikarpore, which place we reached on the 22nd of January, and after our arrival there, until Mr. Macnaghten joined the mission and assumed charge. I feel sick at the remembrance of that period of my life. There were about twenty-two thousand persons in our camp, including the force and followers of his Majesty, and of this crowd I had political charge, without a single assistant. From daylight to midnight I was employed in listening to complaints, settling disputes, answering chits, attending to applications, and suffering annoyances of every conceivable description. All this time I was exceedingly unwell, and living upon tea and physic. I determined not to give in so long as I had strength to speak or to hold a pen; so I struggled against pain and weariness and weakness, and fought the battle of mind against matter to the last. Another week would, I think, have killed me. I remember one day

1839.

being fairly floored, and, 'albeit unused to the melting mood,' when no human eye was upon me, I sat down and wept both long and bitterly. You may fancy from this the state of my nerves. . . . I arrived here a few days ago, and am now a member of the Commander-in-Chief's family party. As yet I have found my situation a very pleasant one. Sir John* is a fine, soldier-like, gentlemanly man, and I get on very well with him. We march to-morrow for Candahar."

The Army of the Indus reached Candahar in April, and Shah Soojah was proclaimed King of Caubul. So far there had been little beyond a grand military promenade. The Barukzye Sirdars had determined to make their stand at a point nearer to the capital. The road between Candahar and Caubul was known to Todd, who laid down the route for the information of Sir John Keane. It has been said that he supplied inaccurate topographical intelligence; that the route which he furnished misled that commander in one most important respect. Todd is said to have spoken of Ghuzni as a place of no great strength; and to have conveyed an impression, if he did not actually state, that it might easily be carried without the aid of a siege train. The route was published some years afterwards in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*. It is there open to all the world. A similar report was given by Lieutenant Leech, of the Bombay Engineers. Perhaps neither the Artillery nor the Engineer officer calculated on such an advantage being given to the enemy as the halt at Candahar; but even after the capture of Ghuzni, Sir John Keane pronounced it a "shell of a place." Tradition declares that he used another word, more significant, if more coarse.

In the preceding Memoir the story of Herat has been brought down to the commencement of the year 1839. Yar Mahomed was then holding fast in his hand the sword of a two-edged policy, and warily watching the turn of events for his opportunity to strike. It was his game to receive from the English all that he could extract from them; but at the very time when the Government and people of Herat were being saved from ruin and starvation by our subsidies, the Minister was quietly making overtures both to the Barukzye

* Sir John Keane,

1839.

Sirdars and the Persian Court to unite with them in a combined effort for the expulsion of Shah Soojah and the Feringhees. But when the British Army appeared at Candahar, and there was small hope of a national resistance, Yar Mahomed was among the first to congratulate the restored monarch. The time, therefore, was held to be propitious for the despatch of a special Mission to Herat. The first design had been to entrust the embassy to Sir Alexander Burnes, but seeing clearly that it was far more likely to result in failure than in success, he was reluctant to undertake an office so laden with perplexities and embarrassments. Eldred Pottinger had been appointed, permanently, Political Agent at Herat; but this was intended as an extraordinary mission, and not in supersession of his powers; and now Todd was invited to accept the office, and he did accept it, saying that he had small hope of success, but that he would do his best for the Government which he served.

The Mission to
Herat.

So in June Major Todd started for Herat, accompanied by Captain Sanders, an Engineer officer of high repute, who was afterwards killed in the battle of Maharajpore; and by Lieutenant James Abbott, of the Artillery, who, above all others, perhaps, was the friend to whom the soul of D'Arcy Todd clave with the greatest fondness.* It was his duty to contract engagements of friendship with Shah Kamran, offensive and defensive, and, with the aid of Sanders and Abbott, to strengthen the defences of the place at the expense of the British Government. For the first few months everything appeared to proceed prosperously, and Todd had no reason to complain of the manner in which the mission was received either by the King or the Wuzeer. He had become personally acquainted with both during the siege, and had written to his brother, saying: "I was much pleased with what I saw of the Afghans during my visit to the town. The Wuzeer, Yar Mahomed Khan, who is the *de facto* governor, is a shrewd, intelligent man, cruel and rapacious, it is said, as a governor, but possessing an abundance of that cool courage which is the first requisite in a commandant of a besieged fortress. Kamran is said to have stupified his in-

* Lieutenant (now Major-General) Login, afterwards Sir John Login, also C. F. North and Assistant-Surgeon formed part of the mission.

1839.

tellect by the habitual use of intoxicating drugs, but he was certainly wide awake during my conference with him, and he struck me as being a remarkably sharp old fellow—he must now be upwards of seventy ; however, he has got a very bad character, and perhaps deserves it.” And now, on his second visit to Herat, he wrote to the same correspondent in a cheerful, though not in an over-confident strain : “ Herat, October 10, 1839. I wrote to you from Candahar, I think, that I was about to proceed as Envoy from the Governor-General to Herat. . . . I received my present appointment under very flattering circumstances, such indeed as to make a youth (don’t laugh ; you can’t see any grey hairs) like myself very vain. As yet I have succeeded in the object of my mission, which was to report on the state of affairs here, and to conclude a treaty of friendship and alliance with Shah Kamran ; but the maze of politics here is very intricate, and our relations, notwithstanding my treaty, are not on a very solid basis.” “ Herat, November 20, 1839. I have received a most kind and flattering letter from the Envoy and Minister at Caubul, who tells me that the Governor-General intends to appoint me permanently to Herat, and that some other situation is to be found for Pottinger. Amongst other things, Mr. Macnaghten writes : ‘ I should say that you will receive a salary of at least 2000 rupees per mensem, and as the office is certainly a most distinguished one, and forms a connecting link between European and Asiatic politics, I should hope that you will, upon the whole, like the arrangement.’ I should think so ! You will, dearest Fred, agree with me that I am a very fortunate fellow.”

He had not been many months at Herat, when he received the distressing intelligence of his father’s death. With what sentiments it inspired him, may be gathered from a letter which he wrote to his brother on the 23rd of February, 1840. “ My public associations,” he said, “ leave me but little time to brood over, or even to think of, my private sorrows. I live in a whirl of constant employment and interruption, and my public duties, as they are highly responsible, occupy my thoughts night and day, to the exclusion, I fear, of much that is of still higher importance. Such is the effect of ‘ things that are seen ’ on the mind and feelings, unless our spiritual

Death of his
father.

1839.

eyes are enlightened by the grace of God. I have placed myself in a false position by grasping at 'the high places' of the world—a world which in my better hours I know to be worthless and transitory. Fred, pray for me! There are some awful passages of Scripture against those who are in my condition. I have preached to others, and have prayed for others, and yet I feel myself a castaway. Do not imagine that these thoughts often pass through my mind. If they did so, I should awake from my slumber of death. My life is one of neglect of spiritual things, and hardness of heart. Having eyes, I see not. Having ears, I hear not. All this, dearest Fred, will, I know, give you exquisite pain, and I perhaps should not write it, but I cannot help myself. These reflections—but they are not reflections, they are only expressions—should send me to my knees, but I cannot pray. There were days when I could have given advice to one similarly situated, but those days are gone, never, I fear, to return. All is dark before me. The world and the world's love have swallowed up the past and the present. The ear of corn has been closed by thorns, and its future——But I cannot go on with this subject, and yet to turn to any other seems to be profanation of mind and spirits. May God bless you, dearest of brothers, in the narrow path, and so shall your life and your death be blessed. . . . Do not believe one word of what you may see in the newspapers about our little party at Herat. Our situation is pleasant, and we are quite as safe as people who walk down Oxford-street in a thunder-storm."

At this time, the difficulties which were to assail him had not developed themselves. "All is quiet here," he wrote on the 1st of April, 1840. "We are on the best possible terms with the authorities of the place, and I believe that Yar Mahomed Khan, who is the *de facto* ruler of the country, is beginning to understand that honesty is the best policy; but I have had no easy task of it to keep my ground, and to prevent the Wuzeer committing some very foolish and ruinous act. My views on a point of the utmost importance differed essentially from those of the Envoy and Minister at Caubul, and I felt certain of going to the wall, but the Governor-General has taken my view of the case, and my task is now comparatively a light one. This is strictly between ourselves.

1840.

... . Some time ago I deputed James Abbott on a friendly mission to the Khan, or King of Khiva. An opening was offered me, so I took advantage of it on my own responsibility, and I am happy to say that the Governor-General has approved of the measure. James Abbott was well received by the Khan, and has been employed as a mediator between Khiva and Russia, the troops of the latter being on their march towards the Khan's capital. James Abbott will probably have to proceed to St. Petersburg! I cannot guess what the powers that be will think of this bold step, but I have done my best to defend it." But this letter had not travelled many miles towards its destination, before the writer had good cause to discard altogether the belief expressed in it that Yar Mahomed had begun to understand that honesty is the best policy. The proofs of the Wuzeer's treachery were now patent at Herat. He had written in the name of Shah Kamran a letter to the King of Persia, saying that, although the English gentlemen were tolerated for the sake of the money which they were freely spending, all the hopes and wishes of his master centred in the asylum of Islam, or, in other words, that he was the vassal of Persia. This letter was given in March by the Persian Government to our representative; and before April was many days old a copy of it was in Todd's hands.*

It had now become only too manifest that the office which D'Arcy Todd held was one which demanded not only high courage and resolution in the representative of the British Government at that semi-barbarous Court, but also con-

* "In the month of January, 1840, up to which time the advances to the Herat Government and people exceeded the amount of ten lakhs of rupees, and when king, chiefs, and people were equally saved from starvation by British aid, a letter was addressed by Shah Kamran to Mahomed Shah of Persia, declaring himself to be the faithful servant of the Shah-in-Shah (Persian King), *that he merely tolerated the presence of the English Envoy from expediency, although, to give him his due, he was by no means niggardly in the expenditure of money, jewels, &c., and that his (Shah Kamran's) hopes were in the asylum of Islam.* This letter was, in March, 1840, sent by the Persian

Minister to Lieutenant-Colonel Sheill, H.B.M. Chargé d'Affaires at Erzeroom, in reply to the demand by the British Government for the restoration of Ghorian to Herat. Letters were, at the same time, addressed by the Wuzeer, or his brother, to the Russian Ambassador at Teheran, requesting that a Russian agent should be immediately sent to Herat."—*Memorandum by the late Sir John Login.* This was by no means the first act of treachery of which Yar Mahomed had been guilty. He had commenced his intrigues with Persia almost, as Todd said, before the ink was dry in which our treaty with Shah Kamran had been written.

1840.

summate tact, and a temper cool, patient, and forbearing. It was, indeed, a post in which success was so difficult of attainment, that Burnes, as before said, ambitious as he was, and little fearful of responsibility, declined it. The nominal ruler of the place, Shah Kamran, was a puppet in the hands of an unscrupulous Minister. Perhaps there was not in all Asia a worse man than Yar Mahomed, or one with whom it was more difficult for an honourable high-minded Christian officer to contend. It must be admitted that, after his own fashion, the Wuzeer conducted his negotiations on behalf both of Herat and of himself with remarkable ability. His one object was to turn to profitable financial account the presence of the British Mission at Herat. He was treacherous and avaricious to an excess even beyond the ordinary limits of Afghan treachery and avarice. All this was now apparent to Major Todd. But he knew that it was the desire of the Government which he served not to precipitate a rupture with the Heratee Government. Our Government had, indeed, condoned the offences of the unscrupulous Minister, hoping almost against hope that he might some day see the wisdom of honesty, and recognise the English as his best friends. Yar Mahomed knew that he had been found out; so he redoubled his exertions to simulate friendship, ever obtaining for each specious proof of good service some substantial recognition from the Treasury of the men he hated. There was a perennial drain upon our resources to strengthen the defences of Herat, perhaps for the use of our enemies; and ever and anon some exceptional circumstances arose to afford a pretext for new exactions from the wily Heratee Minister.*

* Take, for example, the following from Login's Memorandum, which has afforded matter for a previous note: "On being made acquainted with the lenient consideration with which he had been treated by the Government of India, Yar Mahomed professed an extreme desire to give some convincing proof of his devotion to the British Government, and proposed an immediate attack upon the fortress of Ghorian, then in the hands of the Persians. Trusting to his sincerity in this instance, he was, some time afterwards, permitted to make the attempt, and upwards of two lakhs of Company's rupees were advanced by the British Envoy to enable

the Wuzeer to equip a force for the purpose. After every preparation had been made for surprising Ghorian, Yar Mahomed, on the most frivolous pretext, evaded doing so, and although no direct proof against him was obtained, the strongest circumstantial evidence supports the general belief that he at the time wrote to the Governor of Ghorian that the English urged him (the Wuzeer) to attack Ghorian, but that he (the governor) need be under no apprehension! This occurred in the months of June and July, 1840, after advances to the amount of at least nineteen lakhs of rupees had been made for the benefit of the Herat Government."

1840

From bad to worse; from worse to worst; so passed the conduct of the unscrupulous Minister; until, in November, 1840, the patience of the British Agent was well-nigh exhausted. "During the past month," he wrote to Sir W. Macnaghten, in November, "the most aggravated and absurd reports of the advantages gained by Dost Mahomed Khan, the Kohistanees, and Beloochees, over our troops, and of the weakness of our position in Afghanistan, had acquired ready credence in Herat. Urgent and repeated demands for extra assistance in money have been made by the Wuzeer and others, but without effect.* The opportunity has been thought favourable for attempting to work on our fears; and a foray on Candahar was seriously discussed, and I believe ultimately decided upon by the Minister and his advisers, letters having been received by him from the city dwelling on the weakness of its garrison, and inviting him to make the attempt. The extravagance of the Wuzeer about this time involved him in debt to a considerable amount; and finding that I was not disposed to advance more money than had been sanctioned by Government, he endeavoured to obtain my consent to his chapping the Persian territory. Failing in this, he proposed to foray some of the districts nominally subject to his own authority; and at length, discovering the futility of at-

* By this time orders had been issued by the Supreme Government of India not to expend any more money on Herat. See the following extract from a Government letter to Sir W. H. Macnaghten, dated September 21, 1840: "You are aware that his Lordship in Council does not, on the events which have recently occurred at Herat, see any immediate necessity for the British Government to break off its relations with the Government of Shah Kamran, nor, were the measure fully warranted by those events, would his Lordship in Council think it desirable that such a rupture should occur at the present time; but while his Lordship in Council has resolved to act upon the view here stated, upon which he hopes to have an early opportunity of communicating with you more at length, he at the same time does not consider it to be requisite or expedient to incur further expense, under existing circumstances, in adding to the strength of the Herat fortress. In placing Herat in a better state of defence than that in which it stood before the commencement

of the siege in 1837, and in the very liberal aid which has been afforded to the Herat authorities and people, we have assuredly abundantly satisfied every claim upon our national gratitude and honour. His Lordship in Council would very decidedly prefer to lay out whatever funds he might otherwise have felt himself authorised in employing in strengthening Herat, on the construction of a tenable and compact fortress in the immediate neighbourhood of Candahar, upon the plan sketched by Major Thomson and Lieutenant Durand, which has been officially communicated to you. He is anxiously awaiting a further professional report on the advantage, practicability, and cost of acting upon those suggestions, and it occurs to him that the services of Captain Sanders, who is understood to have proceeded to Caubul (unless those of any other officer can be used more conveniently), may be made very usefully available towards procuring the necessary information on this point."

1840. tempting to obtain money from me on these pretences, he thought that by giving publicity to his intention of attacking Candahar, he might intimidate me into purchasing his forbearance. The enterprise was, I believe, resolved on; and though the timely surrender of Dost Mahomed Khan caused this project to be laid aside for the time, it was not fully abandoned." In truth, Yar Mahomed was only waiting for another opportunity to renew his efforts at extortion, and an opportunity soon came. There were symptoms of a state of feverish unrest in Western Afghanistan. The Douranee tribes were breaking into rebellion. It then became Yar Mahomed's game to foment the popular discontent.* He sent emissaries among the disaffected tribes, urging them to open resistance of the foreign yoke; and at the same time he continued his intrigues with the Persian authorities at Meshed, inviting them to combine with him in an attack on Candahar whilst the communications with Caubul were cut off by the snow.

All this was soon known to Todd. He saw plainly the objects at which the astute Wuzeer was aiming, and he was determined to thwart the machinations of his unscrupulous opponent. Often have our political officers, at the remote Courts of semi-barbarous potentates, found themselves surrounded by a surging sea of difficulty and danger, without any succour at hand but that to be derived from their own cool heads and their own brave hearts. But never, perhaps, was an English officer surrounded by so many difficulties as now surrounded the British agent at the Court of Shah Kamran of Herat. Yar Mahomed hated D'Arcy Todd, because he was a humane, high-minded English gentleman, who set his face steadfastly against that abominable system

* "In January, 1841, when the disaffected Douranees in Zemandawar had laid that district under contribution, and had sent exaggerated reports of their power and prowess to Yar Mahomed Khan, he again opened communication with the Persians, sent a large deputation, under a confidential agent, to the Persian Ansef at Meshed, and urged him to assist in an attack on Candahar while snow prevented communication between that city and Caubul. As the opportu-

nity appeared favourable to mark his opinion of this glaring breach of treaty, the presence of a large force in Upper Sindh enabling him to do so with greater effect, Major Todd determined to suspend the monthly allowances (twenty-five thousand Company's rupees) to the Herat authorities until the pleasure of Government were known, and he accordingly, on the 1st of February, notified this intention to the Wuzeer."—*Sir John Login's Memorandum.*

of man-stealing and trading in human flesh, which was so rife in all parts of Central Asia, and from which Yar Mahomed himself derived a large profit.—And here I must pause for a little space, to speak of the great work which Todd accomplished, on his own responsibility, in rescuing the Russian prisoners from the hands of the Khan of Khiva. It was one of the compensations of the earlier part of his residence at Herat, that his beloved friend James Abbott was stationed there also; and that they took sweet counsel together. Abbott was an enthusiast for good, running over with ardent humanity, and there was no possible service on which he could have been employed so grateful to his feelings, as one which promised to enable him to liberate from cruel bondage the “prisoner and the captive” of a Christian nation.* How it fared with him he has himself told, in a book which it is difficult to read without delight and admiration. “When the Russians were advancing upon Khiva,” wrote Todd, some time afterwards, “I despatched on my own responsibility, first, Captain James Abbott, and afterwards Sir Richmond (then Lieutenant) Shakespear, to gain information regarding a most interesting country never before visited by an Englishman, and to endeavour, by persuading the Khan Huzrut to release the Russian captives in his dominions, to take away the only just ground of offence against Khiva on the part of Russia. I am not aware,” he added, and in the truthfulness of the words there was bitter significance, “of any other object of unmixed good which has resulted from the ill-fated expedition (into Afghanistan), and I claim the credit of this, as having originated it on my own responsibility, and without reference to higher authority.”

1840.

As the new year dawned, the difficulties and perplexities which so long had environed Todd as the responsible chief of the Caubul Mission, were obviously thickening around him. Yar Mahomed was continually pressing for more money. He had first one scheme, then another, for which he required a subsidy. Every scheme was, of course, as represented by the Wuzeer, to be wonderfully advantageous, in its fulfilment, to the British Government. But Todd saw clearly that the coin thus disbursed from our Treasury was far more likely to

1841.

* A previous reference is made to this in one of Todd's letters, *ante*, page 249.

1841. be expended on some projects hostile to our people. In fact, the crafty and cupidinous Minister had from the very first been cheating and defrauding us. He knew that this had on more than one occasion been detected and exposed, but subsequently condoned; and he believed that there were no possible lengths of forgiveness and conciliation to which we would not go rather than that the connexion between England and Herat should be severed. It was not strange, therefore, that he should have proceeded to new heights of audacious intrigue. The opportunity was favourable to him, for our communications were interrupted by the snow; so he sent a mission to the Persian authorities at Meshed, proposing to them to unite with the Heratees in an attack on the English at Candahar. But whilst he was playing this game, he was flattering and cajoling the English officers, and endeavouring to persuade them that he was their fast friend and faithful ally. He wanted at this time a large sum of money, and he had a scheme on hand whereby he thought he might obtain it. There had been, from the commencement of our relations with Shah Kamran, some talk of introducing into Herat a contingent of troops under British officers—a project which Todd had favoured—and now Yar Mahomed declared his willingness to admit a British brigade into the valley of Herat on the immediate payment of two lakhs of rupees and a large increase of our monthly contribution. Todd called for a substantial proof of the Wuzeer's sincerity,* but Yar Mahomed refused compliance with the demand. It was obvious that there was no intention on his part to perform the engagement; that the money, if obtained, would be expended in hostilities against us, for his intrigues both with the Persians and with the rebellious tribes in Afghanistan were known to the officers of the British Mission; so Todd refused to advance the required money, and stopped the monthly allowance. On this Yar Mahomed declared that he must have the money, or that the British Mission must depart from Herat.

* "As a test of his sincerity in this instance, Major Todd required that the Wuzeer's son, Sirdar Syud Mahomed Khan, should proceed, in the first place, to Ghiresk, there to await the orders of our Government, and to escort the

troops to Herat should the arrangement be approved of, and that from the date of his arrival there the advance of money should be paid, and the increased allowance commenced."—*Sir John Login's Memorandum.*

1841.

Shah Kamran had long been seriously alarmed for the lives of the English gentlemen. He had told an officer of the Mission that but for his intervention they would all have been murdered and their property pillaged.* That this might any day happen was still only too probable. What, then, was it best in such circumstances to do? If the officers of the British Mission were murdered at Herat, it would be necessary to despatch a British force thither to chastise the murderers, and most embarrassing political complications would have arisen. It appeared, therefore, to D'Arcy Todd that, in the interests of his Government, his best and wisest course was to withdraw the Mission. So, on the 9th of February he departed; and a few days afterwards he had reached the confines of the Afghan territory.

In an official letter to Macnaghten, after speaking of the friendly mission to Persia, Todd summed up the last complications which had clustered about him, by saying: "There was but one opinion in Herat of the real object of Fyz Mahomed Khan's mission to Meshed; indeed, the Wuzeer himself tacitly admitted that he had been led to renew his intrigues with the Persians by the fears which he entertained of our ultimate intentions; and although this was not true, as I know almost to a certainty that the measure was a mere . . . to extort money, I could not but regard it as a manifest breach of treaty. I believe that my superiors would view it in the same light; and having been warned 'not to fall back into unprofitable profuseness,' I did not feel myself authorised to make the large advances required by the Wuzeer, without the promise of an adequate return. An immediate payment was required, and on my refusing to accede to this demand, unless convinced that the money thus advanced would not be employed against us, I was told that I could not be allowed

* This was Dr. Login, who, in the Memorandum before quoted, says: "On one occasion, in August, 1840, so general was the belief of our intended seizure, that, in conversation with Shah Kamran, his Majesty took an opportunity to mention it, and desired that we, *Sahiban English*, should be under no apprehension, as he was our friend, but that, had he not protected us, not a Feringhee would have been left alive.

His Majesty was pleased to conclude by asking whether he did not deserve credit for behaving differently to us from what the Ameer of Bokhara had to Stoddart Sahib? In reply, I thanked his Majesty for his kindness, but said that we were under no apprehension; that we were conscious of having done only good to Herat, and that we feared no ill that could befall us."

1841.

to remain longer at Herat. Previous to the discussion mentioned in the third and fourth paragraphs of my letter dated the 22nd ultimo, I had ascertained that the Topshee-Bashee and his associates had been instructed to intimate this to me in the event of my refusing to comply with the demands of the Wuzeer, who, at the time, was ignorant of my intention to propose the admission of British troops into the citadel or territory of Herat. Even this proposition would have been agreed to, had I consented immediately to pay the Wuzeer's debts, and to furnish him with the means of undertaking a campaign against the Tymunnees, the Seistanees, or the Oosbeks of Maimoonah; but a pledge, such as the presence of the Wuzeer's son at Ghiresk, was required for its fulfilment, and this was refused on a frivolous pretext. At the time of the rupture which was thus forced upon me, I had no possible reason to believe, or even to hope, that our differences with Persia were nearer adjustment than they had been for the last two years. On the 7th of December, the date of my latest letter from Trebizonde, our relations with Persia still remained in an unsettled state; and up to the 19th of that month nothing had been heard at Tabreez of the probability of the return of our Mission. Even from Lord Palmerston's letter to Hajee Mirza Aghassee, of November 21st, it is by no means certain that the Persian Government was inclined to fulfil the principal condition, namely, the evacuation of Ghorian, on which a reopening of friendly intercourse between the Governments of Great Britain and Persia was to depend. My departure from Herat may appear to you unnecessarily precipitate, and it is possible that I might have remained for a few days longer, but had I done so I should have exposed the officers of the Mission to certain insult and danger, and thus have prevented the possibility of a future amicable adjustment of our differences with the Herat Government. The Wuzeer had latterly been constantly in a state of intoxication, and the project of seizing us and plundering our property was seriously discussed, by himself and his drunken associates, as the readiest mode of replenishing his coffers."

February,
1841.

To a private friend he wrote about the same time, describing his departure from Herat: "We left Herat on the 9th instant,

1841.

made our first regular march on the 13th, and arrived safely at Ghiresk on the 21st, with the greatest part of our property. We have had a dangerous and most fatiguing journey. . . . Lieutenant North, of the Bombay Engineers, and Dr. Login, are with me, all well." A few days afterwards he wrote to his brother: "We have, indeed, had a most providential escape from the hands of Yar Mahomed, who was urged by his confidential advisers to seize and plunder us; and our journey to this place, with nearly the whole of our property, was almost miraculous. There were certainly not five persons in Herat who believed that we should reach our destination in safety." But it was not Yar Mahomed's game at this time to excite the further anger of the English, but rather to allay that which he had already roused. He thought that by unlimited lying he might persuade us that it was all a mistake; that the English gentlemen had misunderstood him, and had causelessly taken offence. Our English money was too useful to him to be readily foregone, so he addressed to Todd a long letter of feigned friendship, beginning with these words: "'Thou departedst, and my assembly was broken up! My assembly and my heart were alike broken up by thee! O brother of my soul! my heart is torn in pieces by separation from you. I had formerly believed that the bonds of brotherhood between us could never be dissolved. What has happened that you have thus quickly given up my brotherhood, and destroyed the fruit of your own toil? I had not pictured this in my dreams or in my imagination." And then, after an elaborate attempt at self-justification, he concluded by saying, with that unblushing mendacity for which he was so infamously distinguished: "So long as I live I am your brother and your servant, and I care not if my life is sacrificed to you in the path of friendship. Let your mind be perfectly at ease on this account. Point out to me whatever service you may deem me worthy of, that I may strive with my life to perform it. At this time the confidential Mirza Bazvory is sent to the presence of his Excellency the Envoy and Minister, in order to explain from first to last all that has taken place. If I deserve punishment, chastise me; and if I am worthy of kindness, let it be displayed towards me. In brotherhood, however, I have one complaint to make

1841.

against you. O my brother and friend, why was this departure and this haste? I never can forget it unless you yourself write to me the reason of this precipitancy in your departure. You might, at least, have spoken, and have weighed the *pros* and *cons* of the matter, and then have gone. Now, wherever you may be, God is with you."

If it happened that Yar Mahomed, beneath whose every word of friendship the bitterest enmity was then festering, ever learnt in what manner the sudden departure of his antagonist was visited, he must have felt that he was more than revenged. Todd knew that he had done what he believed to be best for the honour and the interests of his country, and calm reflection did not cause him to mistrust the soundness of the judgment he had exercised. If he had any misgivings, it was on the score of the patience and forbearance he had exercised under insults and provocations of the worst kind. So little, indeed, at this time did Todd apprehend that he could be blamed for what he had done, that bethinking himself as to whether the treatment of the British Mission might not necessitate some armed intervention at Herat, he came to the conclusion that it would devolve upon him to superintend the operations of the army so employed. "Should an expedition against Herat," he wrote, "be determined on, it is possible that I may be sent as Political Agent with the force. Indeed, unless Sir William goes in person, I should hardly think that any one else would be sent."

Judgment of
the Governor-
General.

But after the lapse of a few weeks the truth became apparent to him. Lord Auckland was exasperated by Todd's withdrawal from Herat. He wrote that he was "writhing" under his vexation; and though ordinarily a calm, unexcitable man, it was plain that he had lost his temper, and cast aside his habitual moderation. "Lord Auckland," wrote D'Arcy Todd, in April, 1841, "on receiving intelligence of my quitting Herat, without waiting for my account of the circumstances which led to that event—without one word from me in explanation or defence of the measure—directed a letter to be written to Sir W. Macnaghten, condemning in the most unqualified and unmeasured terms the whole of my proceedings connected with the rupture—removing me from the Political Department, and ordering me to proceed to India im-

1841.

mediately and join my own branch of the service." In other words, Todd was summarily dismissed from political employment, and thus outwardly disgraced in the eyes of his countrymen.*

The decision of the Governor-General wounded him deeply. As he passed through Afghanistan, on his way to Caubul, his mind was rent by distracting thoughts of the degradation to which he had been subjected by Lord Auckland and his Council. But there was at least one drop of sweetness in the bitter cup of his affliction; for his official chief, Sir William Macnaghten, wrote to him that his "conduct had been as admirable as that of Yar Mahomed had been flagitious. And so," he added, "I told the Governor-General." In the second week of June, Todd was at Caubul; and he wrote thence to his brother, saying: "This affliction—for it is an affliction to be held up to the scorn of men as a demented coward—was doubtless intended for wise and merciful purposes, and I will endeavour to look upon it as a message of love. I have set up many idols and have worshipped them with mad devotion, but they have been thrown down before my face by an invisible hand; and I have been taught that God will not brook a rival in the heart of man. . . . The final decision of Lord Auckland arrived about ten days ago. His Lordship is not to be moved, and I see clearly it would not be of the slightest use attempting any further explanation or deprecation. Both have been already offered in a manner and to an extent that would have moved a heart of stone."

But before I leave this subject of British relations with Herat, of which so much has been written in this and in the

Benefits conferred on Herat.

* "I am writhing in anger and in bitterness," he wrote to Sir William Macnaghten, "at Major Todd's conduct at Herat, and have seen no course open to me in regard to it, but that of discarding and disavowing him, and we have directed his dismissal to the provinces. What we have wanted in Afghanistan has been repose under an exhibition of strength, and he has wantonly and against all orders done that which is most likely to produce general disquiet, and which may make our strength inadequate to the calls upon it." The meaning of this is not very clear. The repose which had before been sought was

not under "an exhibition of strength," but under an exhibition of weakness—the weakness that submits to insults and yields to exactions; and strength or weakness, it was becoming "inadequate to the calls upon it;" for "that blister Herat," as Sir Jasper Nicholls called it, was drawing out our treasure to such an extent that it was necessary to arrest the drain upon our resources. Nothing could have been more indicative of weakness than the manner in which we had so long consented to reward with lavish gifts of money the often-exposed treacheries of the most unscrupulous Government in the world.

1841.

preceding Memoir, I must give one more extract from Todd's correspondence, in which are succinctly set forth the benefits which the principality derived from our connexion, the return which we met with for our humane endeavours, and the extreme provocations which Todd had suffered long before he threw up the game. "In the course of six months from the raising of the siege," he wrote in a long, confidential letter to James Outram, "Herat, if left to itself, would have been either in possession of the Persians or the abode of jackals. At this crisis our gallant countryman, Eldred Pottinger, came forward and saved the country from the fate which seemed inevitably to await it. By advancing money to the Government, he had a fair plea for interfering in a matter on which the very existence of the State depended, and he exerted himself strenuously and nobly to put an end to the horrible traffic; and by lending sums to the tradespeople and cultivators, the few people that remained were kept together, and the work of restoration was commenced. Since our arrival here we have gone on with this work, and although a great deal of money has necessarily been expended, the result has certainly been satisfactory. During the last eight months the population has been more than trebled. Thousands of families, who had fled across the frontier to Meshed, Mymoona, and other places, have returned to their homes. A third, if not a half, of the culturable land of the valley is under tillage, and the harvest promises to be a most abundant one. Trade and commerce are gradually reviving. Taxes and duties of all kinds, save on foreign goods, have been remitted. The people are beginning to feel confidence in the present tranquil state of things. The fortifications are undergoing extensive repair and improvement under the superintendence of Captain Sanders. Nearly all the destitute of the city are employed. In fact, there is a reasonable hope that in the course of a very few years Herat will attain a degree of prosperity which it has not known since the days of Hajee Fervoz. Notwithstanding these measures of friendly assistance on our part, the position which we have held, and indeed still hold at Herat, is highly precarious and embarrassing. Our very liberality has been suspected to cover some sinister design, and our intentions, because they are

1841.

honest, have been misunderstood and misrepresented by a people whose policy is always crooked, and who judge of others by themselves. Yar Mahomed Khan, the *de facto* ruler of the country, is an able man, but he is surrounded by a set of creatures who delight to play upon his fears and his fancy by lies and exaggerations, and who have driven him more than once into a foolish and dangerous line of policy, from which I have had considerable difficulty to persuade him to retrace his steps. The seizure of the Douranee chiefs at Caubul was certainly justifiable, perhaps politic, and even imperative, but the distorted accounts of it which reached this place led the Wuzeer to believe that he should meet with the same fate, to doubt the sincerity of our professions towards himself, and to make overtures to the deadly enemy from whom we had but lately saved him. Having in my possession the most convincing proofs of his treachery, I thought that Government would deem the opportunity a favourable one for annexing Herat to the dominions of Shah Soojah, and I strongly advocated the measure. This was in October last. On, however, attentively reconsidering the question in all its bearings, and there appearing to be symptoms of an attempt to organise a religious combination against us in these countries, I saw reason, a few days after the first blush of the affair, to change my opinion, and I came to the conclusion that we should not break with the Government of Herat on the ground of the Wuzeer's late treachery, but that we should rather endeavour to allay the suspicions which he had been led to entertain of our ultimate designs, and to give him, if he needed it, some convincing proof of our honest and friendly intentions. I cannot here enter into the details of what passed immediately subsequent to my discovery of Yar Mahomed Khan's faithlessness. The Mission seemed more than once on the eve of removing, or of being removed from Herat, but we continued to hold on until the final decision of his Lordship was received regarding the policy to be pursued towards this State. This, which reached us about a month ago, is decidedly pacific, and I am now, therefore, doing all in my power to give confidence to the Minister, and to prevent his entering into schemes which would be ruinous to himself and hurtful to us. This, indeed,

1841. I have been doing for the last five months, but being uncertain of the view which his Lordship would take of the case, I felt that I *might* be acting at variance with the wishes of Government. This caused me much painful anxiety and apprehension. My position was rendered still more embarrassing by the prevalence of reports, which reached us almost daily, of an intended advance against Herat from Candahar in the spring. I could not deny the possibility of such a hostile movement being made, for the Envoy and Minister had strongly disapproved of my 'second thoughts,' and had warmly advocated the annexment of Herat to Caubul. I could only state my ignorance of the intentions of Government. However, we kept our ground, and now that I am in possession of the views of Lord Auckland my task is comparatively easy." But it has been shown that it was not easy both to sustain the honour of the nation and to please Lord Auckland. Todd chose the former alternative, and officially perished.

Return to the
Presidency.

At this time, it was his intention to proceed to England by the Bombay route; but he afterwards changed his mind, and went down to Calcutta, which he reached early in November. There he had the unspeakable pleasure of meeting his dear friend James Abbott. He had prepared a memorial to the Court of Directors, to be transmitted to them through the Governor-General, and he hoped by a personal interview to move the heart of Lord Auckland—but he did not succeed. "I have been admitted to an audience with the Governor-General," he wrote on the 13th of November, "and have seen most of the people in authority. His Lordship received me with kindness, and expressed regret at what had occurred, but did not give me an opportunity of explaining fully the motives under which I had acted at the period of my leaving. I have been assured, and I believe the assurance, that every possible facility will be afforded me of speedily adjusting my accounts. The officials, high and low, have been exceedingly civil to me."

1842. The New Year dawned, and ever affectionately mindful of absent friends, D'Arcy Todd wrote to his brother and sister:

“ Although this is the 2nd of the month (January), my New Year’s greeting is not less sincere or heartfelt than if it had been penned on the 1st day of the New Year. May every blessing attend you and yours, my dearest Jane, throughout this and every succeeding year of your earthly pilgrimage. A poet has said :

1842.

“ ‘ As half in shade, and half in sun,
This world along its path advances,
May that side the sun’s upon
Be all that e’er shall meet thy glances.’ ”

I will not, however, express so extravagant a wish, though I love you well enough to desire that your cup of joy may be ever full to overflowing, and that your lot may be always cast in pleasant places. But I know that such is not, and cannot be, the experience of one looking to a ‘ better land,’ and I pray that your joy may be the joy of one who feels that brighter and more enduring things are in store for her, and that your sorrows (light as they may be) may be the sorrows of one who knows that it is but for a moment. I shall ever look back to the few days we were together as the happiest and brightest of my life.”

A month afterwards, he wrote to the same beloved correspondent that he had received no answer to his memorial. But a great trouble had fallen upon the nation ; and in the contemplation of the national calamities he soon forgot his own. “ No answer,” he wrote on the 2nd of February, “ has as yet been sent to my memorial, but the receipt, by the authorities at home, has been acknowledged. I expect the whole matter has been referred to the new Governor-General (Lord Ellenborough); but how petty, how insignificant does the subject of my individual wrongs appear, when we think of the terrible scenes that have lately taken place in Afghanistan, or attempt to peer into the future. I cannot write calmly on this subject ; I find it impossible, as yet, to think calmly of it ; it is difficult to believe that this awful calamity has really fallen upon us, or to realise what we know, with but too painful a certainty, has happened. Of course I have given up all thought of going home ; every soldier must now be at his post. I should wish to be as near the North-West Frontier as possible.”

1842.

On the 28th of February the new Governor-General arrived ; and D'Arcy Todd began to hope that he might meet with justice from one who brought a fresh eye and an unprejudiced understanding to the consideration of his case. But the times were unpropitious for the investigation of individual wrongs ; and Lord Ellenborough, with his strong military sympathies, had small love for the political service. So, little light gleamed from this quarter ; and, in the middle of March, D'Arcy Todd was compelled to acknowledge that all hope was at an end. "I have seen Lord Ellenborough," he wrote. "At the first public levee his Lordship addressed me, and said that he was acquainted with my case, but that he had not leisure at present to enter into it. At a formal audience on Thursday last, although he received me kindly and cordially, he told me he could give me no hope of immediate re-employment in the political department, and advised me, as a friend, to rejoin my regiment. I am, therefore, going out to Dum-Dum in a day or two. All will doubtless be ordered for the best, and I would cheerfully and thankfully acknowledge the hand of God in all that befalls me. To show how much Lord Ellenborough knew of my affairs, I may mention that he asked me, amongst other things, whether I had been much amongst Mahomedans, and whether I had ever been to Persia ; how I had got to Herat, and whether I *remained* there after the retreat of the Persians in 1838 !* On my answering these strange questions, I was told to give a statement of my services to the private secretary. I represented that every particular would be found stated in my memorial, and asked whether his Lordship had received that document ; the answer was, *No* ! So much for his Lordship's being well acquainted with my case. I have taken his Lordship's advice, and have joined my company at Dum-Dum. Now that I *know* the worst, it may prove the *best*. Now that all hope of being re-employed in the Political Department, or any other department, save my own, has vanished, I feel happy and contented. Doubtless, all has been ordered for my

* I well remember the amused look on Todd's face when, coming straight to me from Government House, he told me that the Governor-General said he knew all about his case, and asked him if he had had much intercourse with Mahomedans,

"as if he thought that the Persians and Afghans were Christians." Of course Lord Ellenborough had no such thought, but Governors-General are obliged sometimes to say that they know all about that of which they know nothing.

good, and I would recognise the hand of a merciful God, of an all-wise friend, in all that has befallen or may befall me." 1842.

So he joined the battalion, to which he stood posted, at the head-quarters of the Artillery at Dum-Dum, and subsided into the quietude of regimental life. No man ever descended more gracefully than he did. He took command of a company of artillerymen, and entered into all its professional details with a minute conscientiousness, which showed that he thought nothing beneath him that lay in the path of military duty. He was perfectly resigned, and, except to one or two chosen friends, he never spoke of the injustice that had been done to him—never repined or murmured at his lot. He was very modest and unassuming in his demeanour; and it would have been hard, indeed, for any one who had been admitted to the privilege of familiar intercourse with him, not to regard him with affectionate admiration. He was right when he said that all was for the best; for abundant solace soon came to him from an unexpected quarter; and he was happier than he ever was before. Some years previously, a blight had fallen on his life, as it fell upon the lives of Henry Martyn and Arthur Conolly; and he now, therefore, wrote to his sister, in answer to a suggestion that he might be happier if married: "No, dearest Jane, there never will be any one whom I may call mine, beyond those who are already so. I am, to all intents and purposes, a childless widower. Let this be our last allusion to the subject. I thought Frederick might have told you the story, with the heads of which he is acquainted. The wound is an old one, but is still tender to the touch."

But, by the beginning of August, he had discovered that all this was a mere delusion. His heart now belied the words that he had written, and he was eager to recant: "Dearest sister, what will be your surprise, after what I have said to you on the subject of love and marriage, to hear that I, your brother D'Arcy, *am* about to be married? Many considerations have kept me silent on the subject for some time past; these shall be explained to you when we meet, and they may form a chapter in the romance of life. Marian Sandham, the eldest daughter of the surgeon of H.M.'s 16th Lancers, and grand-daughter of dear old Mr. Fisher, our Senior Presidency Chaplain, is the dear girl who yesterday

1843.

promised to be mine. I have long known her, and yesterday she confessed—but I will not now tell you how or what she confessed. We are to be married in about a fortnight! She—how shall I describe her, or with what shall I commence? You will find in her a worthy sister. She is a child of God, and one of the sweetest of God's children. Her age is little more than twenty—a few months. She came to this country about six months ago; but I cannot go on." And again, on the 15th of August, he wrote: "I told you in my last that I had long known Marian. During the last six months I have had constant opportunity of seeing her; the matter, therefore, has not been lightly, or hastily, undertaken, and I believe that the blessing of God will be with us. . . . Although it was only ten days ago that she consented to be mine, we have agreed that it would be unwise to delay the ceremony longer than is absolutely necessary. Her father is about to leave Calcutta, and we are, of course, anxious that he should be present. Monday, the 22nd of this month, has therefore been fixed upon as the happy day. I cannot hope that you will be present, but I know, however, that you will be present in the best sense of the word; we shall have your prayers and your sweet congratulations."

Marriage.

On the 22nd he wrote again, saying: "Dearest Jane, this is my wedding-day! At six o'clock this afternoon the ceremony will be performed which makes Marian mine, and gives you another sister. I am sure you will look upon one another, and love each other as sisters; you are worthy the one of the other, and I cannot pay you a higher compliment; but this is not a time for paying compliments; the word sounds harshly." And then, a week after the marriage, he wrote to the same sister: "I did expect, by God's blessing, to be happy; but I am a thousand times happier than I expected to be."

There is not the least doubt that this was the very happiest time of his life. I have seen it recorded of him that his remaining years were embittered by a sense of the injustice that had been done to him; but as I was at this time in almost daily communication with him, I may say, with the force of more than conjecture or hearsay authority, that not a feeling of bitterness was left in his mind. It is but little to

1843.

say that he was resigned. He was the most serene, the most contented, the most cheerful of men; in a society which numbered at that time several married families, having within them the best elements of happiness, which were in constant intercourse with each other of the most friendly and pleasurable kind. There are, besides myself, some still living who look back with the most affectionate recollections to those years at Dum-Dum, when D'Arcy Todd and his Marian were winning all hearts by their gentle and endearing ways. In the enjoyment of such home pleasures as were then beneficently vouchsafed to him, he felt that he could live down official injustice and neglect. Assuredly it did not much matter, for he enjoyed, in full and overflowing abundance, the respect, the admiration, and the affection of his brother-officers; and the verdict of the Public had been pronounced in his favour.

As he had now abundant leisure at his disposal, and he had always strongly developed literary tastes, D'Arcy Todd thought that he might turn his experience to account in the preparation of a book containing a description of the countries he had visited, and a narrative of the events in which he had been concerned. He was moved not only by his literary aspirations to address himself to the work of authorship, for such a work would indirectly have been a vindication of his fair fame. But this could not have been done by a Government servant without the consent of Government, so he wrote to Lord Ellenborough's Private Secretary,* saying: "I have contemplated for some time past publishing a work on Persia and Afghanistan, where I have, as you know, spent eight or nine years of my life. As, however, my means of obtaining information on subjects of public interest have been chiefly derived from sources connected with the official situations held by me in those countries, I am doubtful as to how far I may give publicity to the facts with which I am acquainted, and the reflections to which they have naturally given rise in my own mind. I hope that as the events of the late campaign beyond the Indus have now become matter of history, I may be permitted to give to the world all I know on the subject,

* Captain H. M. Durand, of the India. He had served with distinction Bengal Engineers, now Colonel Durand, in Afghanistan, and was on intimate a member of the Supreme Council of terms with Todd.

1843.

having been, as it were, behind the scenes from the time when the expedition was first projected, an actor in some of the principal events in Afghanistan up to the period of the outbreak at Caubul, and not an inattentive observer of what has since occurred. I am the more anxious to publish a work of this kind, as the views which induced me to withdraw the British Mission from Herat in February, 1841, were shamefully misrepresented by one of the leading Indian journals, to the detriment of my character in the eyes of all to whom I was unknown. The Government of India allowed these falsehoods to remain uncontradicted—indeed, gave the weight of its authority to them by removing me from political employment for acting on my own responsibility in a matter wherein I had, to use the words of Lord Auckland when speaking to me upon the subject, done all to the best of my judgment, and for what I believed to be the interests of Government. I was, at the time, of course obliged to remain silent; but up to the period of Lord Auckland's departure, I was led to believe that I should be re-employed, and I therefore heeded little what had been said or written on the subject of my removal from office, which I was given to understand would be but temporary. These hopes were, however, disappointed, and since the present Governor-General has been at the head of affairs, his Lordship's time has been too much occupied to intrude my claims or services upon his notice. But it seems to me that the time has now arrived when I may with benefit to myself make use of the information I have collected, and I shall feel much obliged by your ascertaining how far I may be permitted to do so."

In December, 1843, he was appointed to the command of a company in the Upper Provinces, and was compelled, with sore regret, to turn his back upon Dum-Dum. "I was quietly sowing my last peas and beans," he wrote, "when the intelligence reached me. In leaving Dum-Dum, we almost felt as if we were leaving home. I had never been before so much attached to a place. Indeed, in former years I had looked upon my dwelling-place merely as the ground on which my tent was pitched. The change is easily accounted for, and I need not enlarge upon the subject." In the course of the following March he was appointed to a

Horse Field Battery at Delhi, and he proceeded with his beloved wife to the imperial city. But he was now disquieted by thoughts of Marian's failing health, and as the hot weather came on he was compelled to make arrangements for her residence in the hills. He obtained a month's leave and accompanied her thither, observing that he might have obtained "sick certificate" for himself, but that he wished to be able to rejoin his post at a day's notice, for stirring times were at hand.

1844—45.

Again the peace of India was to be broken. The Sikh legions, no longer restrained by the strong hand of Runjit Singh, for some time dominated the State, and at last they rose to such a height of lawlessness that they threatened to invade the British frontier, and to stream down in a heavy flood of conquest and rapine to the sack of Delhi and the pillage of Calcutta. Averse to war and bloodshed, and resolute not to kindle into activity, by any signs of intended aggression from the British side of the frontier, the ill-suppressed hostility of our dangerous neighbours, Sir Henry Hardinge, who had succeeded Lord Ellenborough as Governor-General of India, was quietly massing his troops in the neighbourhood of the Sutlej, but outwardly only for peaceful exercise. At this time the high military character of D'Arcy Todd was recognised by the bestowal upon him of that great object of regimental ambition, a troop of Horse Artillery. It was the troop, too, with which he had served as a subaltern; so the appointment would have gratified him greatly, if any earthly solace at such a time could have touched his heart. But he was grieving then for his beloved wife, whose mortal ailments made his life one of painful anxiety; and he was not to be cheered by any professional success.

On the morning of the 9th of December all hope had passed away, and at noon Marian Todd was with the angels. "The hand of God is heavy upon me," he wrote on that day to his brother; "but I believe that such an affliction cannot spring from the dust. Pray, pray fervently for your deeply afflicted brother. She fell asleep a few minutes after noon." But it was not permitted to him to fall into a stupor of grief. The Sikhs crossed the Sutlej. His troop was called into action;

1845.

1845.
Moodkhee.

and he went, as he touchingly said, "from the open grave," not wishing ever to return to it, into the midst of that bloody warfare. The battle of Moodkhee was fought, and D'Arcy Todd passed, alive and uninjured, through all the perils of that murderous conflict. He has told the story himself in the following letter—the last which he ever wrote—to his beloved brother :

"Camp, Moodkhee, December 20, 1845.

"MY DEARLY LOVED FRED,—I little thought when I last wrote that my next would be about such subjects as at present occupy my time and thoughts.

"The day after I committed all that was mortal of my beloved one to the earth, the whole of the Umballah troops were ordered, at a few hours' notice, to march towards Ferozepore. We marched on the 11th, and reached this place (one hundred and forty-six miles from Umballah, and about twenty from Ferozepore) at two o'clock on the afternoon of Thursday, the 18th, by forced marches of twenty and thirty miles a day. As we approached Moodkhee we received intelligence of a large body of Sikhs being in our front, and we therefore marched across the country in battle array. The enemy, however, kept out of sight, and we reached our ground without a shot being fired. In about an hour after our arrival the alarm was given, and the whole line turned out in an incredibly short space of time. We immediately advanced in the direction of the enemy, towards the west; and when we had gone about two miles they opened a heavy fire of artillery upon us. We came into action, and returned it with interest, the distance being about a thousand yards. They very soon slackened their fire, and we again advanced. They had taken up a very strong position in a low but thick jungle (thirty or forty guns, and twenty-five thousand cavalry and infantry). After some heavy firing from our artillery, our cavalry and infantry went at them, our artillery still advancing, and firing when opportunity offered. The scene was fearful. We got up close to the enemy, whose fire, round shot, shells, grape, jingalls, and musketry, can only be likened to a pelting storm. I cannot conceive anything so hot. Our officers and men were falling every moment; but at last, by the blessing of God, and

1845.

British courage and perseverance, the victory was ours. It was quite dark before the battle was over, and of course there was great confusion. Our loss has been great. Of the Artillery alone we have lost upwards of forty killed, and I know not how many wounded. Captain Jasper Trower, killed; Lieutenant Pollock, dead, after amputation of the left leg; Captain Dashwood, dangerously wounded in arm and leg;* Lieutenant Wheelwright, one of my two subalterns, shot through the arm, but doing well; Lieutenant Bowie, slightly wounded; several officers' chargers killed under them. I lost four men killed, and three wounded; five horses killed, three wounded. By the wonderful mercy of God I and my other subaltern (Mackinnon) escaped untouched, when thousands of balls were flying about our heads. No fire could possibly have been hotter. The Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief were both in the thickest of the fight, and lost some aides-de-camp. I cannot tell you who have been killed or wounded in the cavalry and infantry, but I think that sixty or seventy officers are amongst the casualties. The bodies are now being brought in and buried. We have taken and brought into camp twenty of the enemy's guns, and the slaughter on their side must have been very great. We did not return to camp till past midnight.

“It would be impossible to describe the coolness of our men. They were literally steadier than when on parade. The Governor-General said, yesterday, that much as he had heard of the Bengal Artillery, their conduct surpassed his expectations, and that he had seen nothing finer in the Peninsula. I should think not! No despatch or order has yet appeared, but we and you will learn all soon. Our force consisted of five troops of Horse Artillery, two Horse Field Batteries, 3rd Light Dragoons, Body Guard, 4th and 5th Regiments Light Cavalry, 9th Irregular Horse (Christie's), 9th, 31st, and 50th Queen's Infantry, and about five regiments of Native Infantry.

“To-morrow we are to march on Ferozepore, and may expect another battle, as the Sikhs are said to be in great force in our front. General Littler's Ferozepore force is, however,

* The wounds were mortal. He died soon afterwards.

1845. in their rear, and the enemy will then be hemmed in, and, by the blessing of God, another victory appears certain. But these scenes are dreadful, and my soul sickens at what I have seen. The 29th Queen's and our 1st European Regiment have just joined us.

"I have been hurried away from even the recollection of my crushing affliction, and can only at times creep into solitude, and think, and weep. In a few hours after I stood at her open grave, I was called upon to exert myself to the utmost in making preparations for the march of my troop on service! God has spared me, who am not worthy to live, and she, my beloved one, in health, and youth, and spirits, has been stricken down, leaving the world to me as a vast grave. 'Be ye also ready,' sounds in my ears, and I only wish to live that the grace of God and the love of Christ may prepare me to leave a world in which there can now be no joy for me. I am desolate and bereaved. Oh, my brother and friend, pray for me! I cannot write more. Dearest Jane, accept my best love. May the God of love be with you both.

"Ever, my dearly loved brother,

"Your most affectionate and attached

"D'ARCY.

"You had better still direct to Umballah or Ferozepore. The whole of yesterday we were drawn up in battle array, about five hundred yards in front of our camp. The enemy was supposed to have come back again, but they did not make their appearance."

Ferozshuhur.

But it little mattered whither his brother's letters were sent. The following day was one of the most memorable in the annals of our Indian Empire, for then was commenced the great battle of Ferozshuhur; then the military strength of the English reeled and staggered beneath the tremendous fire which the Sikhs poured in upon us from their entrenched position. The story has been often told before, and there is no need that I should repeat it. Those Sikh batteries brought desolation to many homes; but Todd was himself desolate, and life had become only a burden to him, and there was not on that ensanguined battle-ground one for whom Death had fewer terrors. It was about the time of sunset on the 21st

of December that his troop was ordered to move forward. He placed himself in front of his battery, and was in the act of giving orders for the advance, when a nine-pounder round-shot from one of the enemy's guns struck him full in the face, and carried his head completely off his shoulders, with such crushing effect that nothing more of D'Arcy Todd than the headless trunk was ever recognised. So in "a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," death came; and "among the many who fell on that mournful day there was not a braver soldier or a better man."

It is not known with accuracy where he was buried. One statement before me, written by a brother-officer, a companion in arms during this dreadful conflict, sets forth that the remains of D'Arcy Todd were wrapped in his cloak and buried on the field of battle. Another comrade, in the same regiment, writes that the body was removed to the cantonment of Ferozepore, and that it was buried in consecrated ground. When we consider the tremendous excitement and confusion of those two days—days bridged over by a night without a parallel in the remembrance of those who live to recall it—we cannot wonder that there should be some uncertainty as to the place of any soldier's grave. And, after all, it little matters. D'Arcy Todd's monument is in the hearts of many loving friends. In the glorious regiment, whose harness he wore when he died, there have been men who have lived to earn greater distinction; but I believe that, had his career not been thus prematurely cut short, he would have distinguished himself on other great fields of enterprise, and taken a high place among his cotemporaries in the annals of our Anglo-Indian Empire. And he lived long enough to be honourably regarded by all who knew the history of his life, and to be most affectionately remembered by all who ever came within the influence of his living presence. He was a gentle, loving, God-fearing man, but endowed with courage and constancy of the highest order, and resolute to do anything that came within the scope of his duty as a Christian soldier.

At the close of these four Memoirs of Officers who distinguished themselves so greatly in the countries beyond the

1845.

Indus, I cannot abstain from recording a few sentences regarding the services which they have conjointly rendered to the world as contributors to our geographical knowledge of those interesting and increasingly important countries. But I need not do this in my own words, for a much higher authority, whilst this sheet has been passing through the press, has enabled me to do it far better, by the citation of the following pregnant passage from a paper in the *Quarterly Review*, written by one to whom Oriental science, in many departments, is infinitely indebted :

“ It would really seem as if a fatality had attended us, so few—so very few—of the English officers who advanced the cause of geography in Central Asia having lived to wear the laurels which they had earned. Stoddart, who was the first to cross the mountains from Herat to Bokhara, and Arthur Conolly, who travelled by an entirely new route from Cabul direct to Merv and so on to Khiva, Kokand, and ultimately to Bokhara, both perished miserably at the latter place in 1841. D'Arcy Todd, a traveller of some note himself, and to whom we are indebted for the adventurous journeys of James Abbott and Richmond Shakespeare from Herat to Khiva and Orenberg, was killed at the battle of Firoz-shahar. Edward Conolly, the first explorer of Seistan, was shot from the walls of an obscure fort in the Kohistan of Cabul; and Dr. Lord, the companion of Wood in the valley of the Oxus, was killed in the same district and nearly at the same time. Dr. Forbes, a most promising young traveller, was also murdered in Seistan, in 1841; and Lieut. Pattinson, the only officer who ever explored the valley of the Helمند from Zamín-Dawer to the vicinity of the Lake, was butchered by the mutinous *Jan-baz* at Candahar, soon after the outbreak at Cabul. Col. Sanders, of the Bengal Engineers, who compiled from his own observations an excellent map of the country between Candahar and the Hazareh Mountains to the north-west, also fell a few years later at Maharajpoor; Eldred Pottinger, who on two occasions crossed the mountains direct between Cabul and Herat, survived the Cabul massacre and the dangers of an Afghan captivity, merely to die of fever at Hong-kong; and the list may be closed by a name—still more illustrious in the annals of geographical science—that of Alexander Burnes himself, who, as it is well known, was the first victim of the Cabul insurrection. Through the labours of these men and of their worthy coadjutors—the officers of the Quartermaster-General's Department—Afghanistan Proper may be said to have been very extensively, if not thoroughly, explored between the years 1838 and 1843.”

SIR HENRY LAWRENCE.

[BORN 1806.—DIED 1857.]

“ABOUT half-past one o'clock in the afternoon (of the 4th of May, 1799), General Baird, having completed his arrangements, stepped out of the trench, drew his sword, and in the most heroic and animating manner said to his men, ‘Come, my brave fellows, follow me, and prove yourselves worthy the name of British soldiers!’ In an instant both columns rushed from the trenches and entered the bed of the river, under cover of the fire of the batteries. Being immediately discovered by the enemy, they were assailed by rockets and musketry. The forlorn hope of each attack consisted of a sergeant and twelve Europeans, who were followed by two subalterns’ parties; that of the right column was commanded by Lieutenant Hill, of the 74th; and the other of the left column by Lieutenant Lawrence, of the 77th.”—Thus wrote, in the first year of the present century, Colonel Alexander Beatson, historian of the war with Tippoo Sultan, and of the famous siege of Seringapatam. Of these two lion-hearted subalterns, who had thus volunteered for the forlorn hope, the first-named went to his death. The second came out of the breach badly wounded, but alive. God had bountifully preserved him to become the father of heroes.

1799.
The father of
the Lawrences.

He had gone out to India, some years before, as a volunteer, hoping soon to receive a commission through General Floyd, an officer who had served with distinction in the first war with Tippoo. In this, however, he had been disappointed, for the military authorities in England cancelled the commission which was given to young Lawrence in India; and eventually he was compelled to purchase into the 77th Foot. With this regiment he served in different parts of India, until his gallantry at

1800—15. Seringapatam was rewarded by the gift of a company in the 19th.

Having recovered from his wounds, Alexander William Lawrence* took to himself a wife—the daughter of a Protestant clergyman in the north of Ireland, named Knox. Their union was a fruitful one. The first-born of the family was a daughter, who in womanhood became all that an elder sister could be to her brothers, and whose good influence upon them was ever gratefully acknowledged. Then there were two sons, christened Alexander and George St. Patrick, who came in time to do good service to their country; and next, on the 20th of June, 1806, was born, at Maturah, in the island of Ceylon, where Major Lawrence was garrisoned, another son, who was named Henry Montgomery, of whom I am about to write. His mother used, in playful reference to the well-known gems of that place, to call him her “Maturah diamond.”†

Early education.

In 1808, Major Lawrence returned to England, and was appointed, as Lieutenant-Colonel, to a garrison battalion, then posted in the island of Guernsey.‡ From this place, in 1815, the three elder boys, Alexander, George, and Henry, were sent to the Londonderry diocesan school, the head-master of which was their mother's brother, the Rev. James Knox. It is a substantial inornate building, with a bald grey frontage looking across the high road towards the river, from which it has derived its name of Foyle College. There is something grim and forbidding about it, suggestive of stern discipline and hard training; and there the young Lawrences, and other boys of high promise, including Robert Montgomery, who was afterwards so honourably associated with

* It is a curious circumstance that some doubt has been thrown even upon the name of the father of the Lawrences. I learn from the Adjutant-General's Office that Lieutenant Lawrence, of the 77th, is entered in the books of the Horse Guards as John Lawrence, and that as John Lawrence he was promoted to a company in the 19th Foot. In the Annual Army List of 1808 his name appears as Alexander Lawrence. There is no doubt, however, of the identity of “Alexander” and

“John,” or of the correctness of the former designation.

† Henry Lawrence was the fourth son—another brother, not mentioned in the text, died in his infancy. Sir John Lawrence, the present Viceroy of India, was born in Yorkshire on the 4th of March, 1811.

‡ Colonel Lawrence was appointed Governor of Upnor Castle in 1816 or 1817, and died in that capacity on the 7th of May, 1835.

Henry and John in the Punjab, worked and played and fought, and grew into sturdy robust youths, learned at least in great lessons of self-help. There they heard the grand historical traditions of the famous city by which they dwelt, and went forth into the world with the old watchword of Derry, "NO SURRENDER," engraven on their hearts. 1815—20.

Two or three years afterwards, Colonel Lawrence bethought himself that the time had come for him to consider the means of providing for his boys; and he wisely determined to find, if he could, standing-room for them on the great continent of India, where every man had a fair chance, without reference to birth or fortune, of making his way to the front. Fortunately he had some "interest at the India House." A connexion of Mrs. Lawrence's family—Mr. Huddleston—was one of the Directors of the East India Company. A cadetship was obtained for Alexander, who, in 1818, went over from Ireland and entered the Company's military seminary at Addiscombe. A year or two afterwards George made a similar migration. Neither brother, however, pursued his academical career to the end. The Cavalry was held to be a finer service than the Artillery, and "India House interest" availed to procure for each brother in succession a commission in the more favoured branch.

In 1820, another Addiscombe appointment was obtained for Colonel Lawrence's third surviving son; and in the August of that year Henry Lawrence entered the cadet college. Like his brothers, he was soon afterwards offered a Cavalry appointment; but he said that he would rather go through his terms at Addiscombe and take his chance, than that it should be said the Lawrences could not pass an examination for the scientific branches of the service, and were therefore sent out in an arm that demanded no examination at all. So he remained at Addiscombe, doing well there, not brilliantly; and taking at the end of his time a good place among the cadets selected for the Artillery. It was a merciful dispensation that he ever lived to go up for examination at all; for it happened that one day, as he was bathing in the canal, the cramp or some other ailment seized him, and he would almost certainly have perished, but for the presence of mind of one of his com-
At Addiscombe.

1820—28. rades. A cry was raised that “Pat Lawrence” was drowning, and instantly a brother-cadet, Robert Macgregor,* dashed into the water, and succeeded in bringing the sinking youth safely to land. This is the one noticeable incident of Henry Lawrence’s early life. At Addiscombe he was held in high esteem by his fellow-students, as a brave, honourable, and generous youth, with good intelligence, not very highly cultivated; but I do not know that any of his cotemporaries predicted that he would live to outstrip them all.

His first
service.

In 1822, Henry Lawrence, having been appointed to the Bengal Artillery, arrived at Calcutta, and joined the headquarters of his regiment at Dum-Dum. There he set himself diligently to work to study his profession, and—in this respect differing not at all from his young brother-officers—longed ardently for active service. The opportunity was soon presented to him. The war with Burmah commenced, when he was a subaltern of two or three years’ standing; and Lieutenant Lawrence formed part of a detachment of artillery that was sent under Colonel Lindsay to join General Morrison’s division, whose business it was to drive the Burmese out of Arracan, and to join the main army at Prome. A long and harassing march, across one of the most unhealthy tracts of country in the world, brought the young soldier nearly to his grave. He recovered, however, sufficiently to be conveyed to Penang—then a favourite sanitarium; and from that place he went to China, towards the end of 1826, where he found great solace in the Factory Library at Canton. But these partial changes were not sufficient for one smitten with the deadly curse of the Arracan fever; and so eventually he returned to England, for the recovery of his health.

The Survey
Department.

But he was not one to be idle, because “on leave.” A friend who met him for the first time at Canton, thinks that

* I cannot deny myself the pleasure of naming the young hero who did this good thing, though the modesty of his nature may protest against the publicity. The Robert Macgregor of the text is Major Robert Guthrie Macgregor, formerly of the Bengal Artillery, a man distinguished in many honour-

able capacities, and not least in that of a scholar and a poet. His admirable volume of translations from the Greek Anthology, recently published, is one of those ever pleasant and acceptable instances of the successful cultivation of literature by men of active business habits and eminently useful lives.

in the library there he devoted himself much to the study of works on Surveying. It is certain that during his residence in England he joined the Irish Survey, and acquired much knowledge and experience, that afterwards were extremely serviceable to him. This visit to Ireland had also another very happy influence on his after life, for he there formed an attachment to one who afterwards became the beloved and honoured companion of his life. When he returned to India, greatly improved and strengthened in every way, he rejoined his regiment, firstly at Kurnaul, where his brother George was stationed, and with whom he lived, and afterwards at Cawnpore, where, in 1832, he passed an examination in the native languages, and thus qualified himself for employment on the Staff. Nor was it long before—mainly, I believe, through the instrumentality of George Lawrence, who represented to Lord William Bentinck that his brother had served with the Irish Survey—Henry was appointed as an Assistant to the great Revenue Survey of India, which was instituted in 1833. His head-quarters were at Goruckpoor. There, under happy auspices, he renewed and cemented his friendship with Mr. Reade, of the Bengal Civil Service, whom he first met at Canton and afterwards at Cawnpore—a friendship which was broken only by death.

“At Goruckpoor,” this gentleman tells me, “his house and mine were in adjacent compounds. A plank bridge led from the one to the other, and my kitchen was midway between the two domiciles. Lawrence, who in those days seemed to live upon air, and was apt, in the full tide of his work, to forget every-day minor matters, used frequently to find that he had no dinner provided, though he had asked people to dine with him; and we used to rectify the omission by diverting the procession of dishes from the kitchen to his house instead of to mine. My inestimable major-domo had wonderful resources, and an especial regard for Lawrence. The gravity of manner with which he asked in whose house dinner was to be laid, was a frequent source of amusement. We had other matters besides a kitchen and buttery in common. He had taken by the hand a young man, who had been in the ranks, by name Pemberton, who afterwards rose in the Survey Department. At the same time I had charge of a young fellow

1833—36.

whose discharge from a regiment had been recently purchased by his friends. Interested in a young Scotch student who had found his way to India by enlisting in the Company's Artillery, Lord Auckland had recently emancipated him, and sent him up the country, to be master of the English school at Goruck-poor. To that school, Lawrence, who was greatly interested in it, and who supported it with personal aid and liberal pecuniary contributions, gathered all the boys of poor Christian parents to be found in the cantonment and station, and thence transplanted them, with some of the more intelligent lads of the city, to the Survey Office. Some of the former were little fellows—so little, indeed, that Mr. Bird used to call them his 'Lawrence's offsets;' but his care of them was as kind as his teaching was successful. He had a tattoo (pony) for each of them, and relieved the labours of the desk by hurry-skurrying them over the country. I note these particulars," continues my informant, "because in comparing the experiences we elicited of inner barrack life from the young men above mentioned, as we often did, in the teaching and manipulation of the said offsets, and the satisfactory result, I think we may trace the germ in Lawrence's mind of the noble design of the great establishments imperishably associated with his name."

1835.

And, doubtless, among the honourable incentives to exertion which were ever urging Henry Lawrence forward in the right road, the thought of the good that he might thus accomplish was not the least powerful. But the attainment of this great object was yet remote, though his foot was firmly planted on the ladder of promotion; for there was one nearer and dearer to him, who needed his help, and his first care was to provide for her. The death of his father had greatly reduced his mother's income; and the Lawrences—not Henry only, but he and all his brethren in India—were contributing from their pay, not at that time in any case very large, more than enough to make her declining years, in all outward circumstances, easy and prosperous. In this good work Henry was very active, and one who, at the time of which I am now writing, helped him in the matter of remittances, and took counsel with him as to the best means of providing additional comforts for the widowed lady, says that he had then, in this

holy work, "the fervour of an apostle and the simplicity of a child."

1836.

Much might be written about this period of his career—about the days when Lieutenant Lawrence threw all his energies into the survey-work entrusted to him, and was so prompt, it may be said so explosive, in his operations, that Mr. James Thomason, afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, referring partly to his profession and partly to his bursts of activity, which carried everything before them, nicknamed Henry Lawrence "Gunpowder." Those were happy days with him, for they were the early days of his married life. Never was there in the world a fitter helpmate than Henry Lawrence found in his cousin, Honoria Marshall. The highest and holiest Christian virtues were combined in her with great natural intelligence, improved by successful culture. Her energies were scarcely inferior to her husband's; and, perhaps, he mainly owed it to her that literature, in after years, became the recreation, and was one of the greatest solaces of his life. There was too much active work for him at this time to leave much space for the study of books; but there were little snatches, if not of actual leisure, of less absorbing work, which might be turned to good literary account. For such students did not need the environments and accompaniments of well-stocked and well-furnished libraries, but could gather knowledge from a single travel-stained volume under a tree or on the banks of a nullah.

Of Lawrence's daily life at this time, one of his most familiar and cherished friends, who worked with him then and afterwards, to his own honour and to the profit of the State, has furnished me with an account so life-like and so interesting in its details, that I give it here in the words of the writer: "My first acquaintance with Henry Lawrence, which grew up into a full friendship, commenced at Goruckpoor in 1836, when I was appointed his Assistant in the Revenue Survey, which he conducted in that lovely district. Well do I remember the welcome he gave me in his tent, pitched in a magnificent mango grove; the trees, towering above head and entwining their branches, afforded a shady canopy covering an area of many acres. Such groves I have never seen in

1836—37. any other part of India. The tent was of the ordinary size prescribed for a subaltern with a marching regiment, about twelve feet square; but it is not so easy to describe the interior. A charpoy in one corner, an iron stove in another, a couple of tables and three or four chairs, but every superficial inch of each was taken up with papers, plans, or maps; even the floor was covered with papers, carefully placed on certain patterns of the carpet, to aid his memory in certain corrections which each required, but which frequently accumulated to such extent that the object of placing them there was sometimes forgotten. It was undoubtedly unsystematic, or was rather a system peculiarly his own, which, with his wonderful memory, he worked to surprising effect, but it created a great litter, and to the eyes of his new Assistant looked very like Chaos. I was soon set to work to learn my new duties, for I found that the knowledge I had obtained of surveying at Addiscombe was only as the A B C to the science of the Revenue Survey of India, and in teaching me he never spared himself, but having taught me, he never did anything that I could do for him. This was a wise maxim, on which he piqued himself, for it gave him time to confine his attention to supervision and to literature, to which he devoted every moment he could spare from his professional duties. His great strength lay in ubiquity. Our survey covered a large area. Natives were extensively employed both in the scientific survey, which laid down minutely the boundary of each village, its topographical features, area, &c., on scientific calculations and observations, and the field survey, whereby each field was measured and mapped, its produce, soil, and capabilities recorded, and its total area compared with that of the scientific survey. To all who know anything of the native character, it will be evident that a wide field for abuse and peculation lay open. His object and delight was to come down upon these men, however distant, at unexpected times, and bad luck to the man who was caught cheating! On one occasion he found a native surveyor had been taking bribes to record the soil of an inferior description to befriend the farmer and defraud Government. He seated him in a tree over his tent for some hours, to be held up to contempt, and as an example to others. On another occasion,

he found that the surveyor had taken the bribe; but the complaint was from the landed proprietor, that, having paid the man for entering his soil as of the worst, he had recorded it of the best quality. On another, he found that his theodolite surveyor had extorted money from landed proprietors by pretending that the needle attached to it would not act until it felt the influence of silver; on which the deluded Zemindar, having placed a rupee or two on the instrument, by a sly touch the needle was made to fly round to its pole. Lawrence had always some novel punishment for such offenders. He could not afford the time to have them punished criminally, and indeed it would have been difficult in a court of justice to have brought home the charges to conviction.

“He gave himself,” continues the narrator, “little rest even at night. I was called up at all hours to take a meridian altitude of Sirius or some other star for the latitude, or an elongation of Polaris to test our meridian line, and not unfrequently more for fun than utility, for a lunar observation, which we called ‘humbugging the stars;’ for we could seldom come within twenty miles of our exact longitude, and used to wonder how such very uncertain observations, with their intricate calculations, could be turned to account at sea. . . . The natives employed upon the survey evinced great aptitude in learning the use and great delicacy in the manipulation of the theodolite, but he would not employ them when there was any danger to be apprehended. Thus, on one occasion after his marriage, we had to enclose a large tract of the Dhoon, at a season of the year when Europeans had never ventured to expose themselves, so he took one side of the area himself and gave me the other side, and we were to meet. It was a dense jungle at the foot of the Nepaul hills, intersected with belts of forest trees—a famous tiger tract. The dews were so heavy, that my bed under a small tent was wet through. Fires were kept constantly lighted to keep off the tigers and wild elephants, which gave unmistakable indication of their proximity, and it was not till eleven or twelve o’clock that the fog cleared sufficiently to permit of our laying a theodolite. It was in such a tract that, after three or four days, we connected our survey, and when we met, to my surprise I found Mrs. Lawrence with him. She

1836—37. was seated on the bank of a nullah, her feet overhanging the den of some wild animal. While she, with a portfolio in her lap, was writing overland letters, her husband, at no great distance, was laying his theodolite. In such roughings this admirable wife (a fitting helpmate for such a man) delighted to share, while at other times, seldom under circumstances of what other people call comfort, she would lighten his labours by reading works he wished to consult, and by making notes and extracts to which he wished to refer in his literary compositions. She was one in a thousand; a woman highly gifted in mind, and of a most cheerful disposition, and fell into his ways of unbounded liberality and hospitality with no attempt at external appearance of luxury or refinement. She would share with him the wretched accommodation of the 'Castles'—little better than cowsheds—of the Khytul district, and be the happiest of the happy. Or we would find her sharing a tent some ten feet square, a suspended shawl separating her bedroom and dressing-room from the hospitable breakfast-table; and then both were in their glory. No man ever devoted himself more entirely to what he considered his duty to the State, but it did not prevent his devotion to the amelioration of the condition of his fellow-creatures, whether European or Native, and no man in either duty ever had a better helpmate than he had in his wife. It was one day, when on leave for the benefit of his health, that these two, in happy commune, were reclining on the side of the Sonawar mountain opposite Kussowlee, when the thought occurred to one, was responded to by the other, and taken up by both, that they would erect a sanatorium for children of European soldiers on that very spot. The result is well known, and the noble institution, now under the direction of Government, bears his honoured name."

The Lawrence
Asylums.

These were the famous Lawrence Asylums of which it is now time to speak. Almost ever since he had entered the service, the "cry of the children" had been continually sounding in his ears. A voice had come to him from the Barrack Square, appealing for help; and it had become the darling wish of his heart to respond to it in a befitting manner. The state of the children of the European soldiery was, indeed, such as to move the compassion of all who had

eyes to see and faculties to comprehend. Even in the happiest circumstances, with all the appliances which wealth can furnish for the mitigation of the exhausting effects of the climate, European children in India are at best sickly exotics. They pine and languish, with pale faces, weakly frames, and fretful tempers. Not easily preserved were the lives of these little ones, though tenderly nurtured and jealously protected against all adverse influences; amidst the draggings-up of the barracks it was a mercy and a miracle if any were preserved at all. The mortality among the children of the European soldiery was, statistically, "frightful;" but more frightful, perhaps, the life of the few who were rescued from death. The moral atmosphere of the Barrack Square was not less enervating and destroying than the physical; for the children saw and heard there what should not have been revealed to their young senses; and the freshness and beauty of innocence were utterly unknown among them. Seeing this, and thinking over it, very wisely and compassionately, Henry Lawrence, whilst yet a young man, conceived the idea of rescuing these poor children, body and soul, from the polluting atmosphere of the barracks, and he ardently longed for the time when, out of the abundance of his own store, he might provide healthy and happy homes for these poor neglected little ones. To transport them from the plains to the hills, to place them under proper guardianship, to give them suitable instruction, and ample means of innocent recreation—these were his cherished projects. He saw how easily it could be done—how great a blessing it would be when done; and he determined that, should God ever grant to him worldly wealth, he would consecrate a portion of it to the rescue of the children.

A new field was now stretching out before him. Whilst he was still in the Survey, in 1838, the "Army of the Indus" was organised for the invasion of Afghanistan. Eager for active service, Henry Lawrence joined Alexander's troop of Horse Artillery, which formed part of the original force. But it was afterwards ordered to stand fast, and though for a while he was disappointed, the disappointment paved the way

1837—38.

In the Political
Department.

1838—42.

to better things. It was at this time that Henry Lawrence attracted the attention of Mr. (now Sir George) Clerk, who for many years ably represented British interests on the North-West Frontier of India, and secured to himself, as few have done, the unbounded confidence both of the white and black races. He saw in the Artillery subaltern the stuff of which the best political officers are made, and obtained his appointment as an Assistant to the Frontier Agency.

The advance
on Caubul.

The war in Afghanistan was a grand success. The war in Afghanistan was a gigantic failure. George Lawrence, who was then the Military Secretary of the ill-fated Minister, Sir William Macnaghten, was endeavouring, with every prospect of a favourable result, to obtain employment for his brother in the Anglo-Douranee Empire, when the prodigious bubble burst, and the whole country was deluged with blood. An army of retribution was then organised, and with the force under General Pollock was to march a Contingent of Sikh troops. With this Contingent it was necessary to send a British officer, nominally to be the medium of intercommunication between the British and the Sikh commander; in reality to hold the latter to his allegiance, and virtually to command the force. To this post Captain Henry Lawrence was appointed. It was one, the duties of which required the exercise of as much tact and forbearance as of constancy and courage. The Sikhs were very doubtful allies, because the tide of adversity had set in upon us; and their first manifestations were of a most discouraging character. Whether they were more cowardly or more treacherous it is hard to say, but our first attempt to utilise them between Peshawur and Ali Musjid, was a dead failure. They evinced only an aptitude to turn their back upon the enemy and to get in among our baggage and to plunder it. It is not improbable that if any serious disaster had overtaken our forces, they would have turned against us, if only for the sake of the pillage. All this was very patent to Henry Lawrence, whose energies were for some time expended in vain attempts to make them do their duty as allies. Nor were these the only vexations which disquieted him during that sojourn at Peshawur in the spring of 1842. There was a bad feeling among the Sepoys, and I am afraid also a bad feeling among

some of the Sepoy officers ; and Henry Lawrence wrote, with ineffable disgust, of the things which were openly said and done in the British camp. He made no attempt to disguise his feelings, but wrote and spoke so strongly on the subject, that his utterances reached the ears of the Commander-in-Chief, who took official notice of the subject. Never at any time was Henry Lawrence more eager and energetic than during this halt at Peshawur. He was ready for any kind of work, and little cared whether it fell within the range of his own recognised duties, so long as he could be of service to the State.

When the retributory army advanced, and it became plain that the fortune of the Company was only for a while obscured, and that Pollock was pushing his way on to victory, the Sikhs, who thought that there might be some "loot" obtainable at Caubul, began to put on a bolder front, and to manifest symptoms of increased fidelity and good conduct. Henry Lawrence, whose brother George was one of the captives in the hands of Akbar Khan, was naturally anxious to advance to the Afghan capital ; and the General, though somewhat apprehensive that his Sikh friends might be a source rather of weakness than of strength to him, consented that, whilst some detachments were left to hold posts in our rear, a compact force should go forward to Caubul. That they really did good service is mainly to be attributed to Lawrence's admirable management of the Contingent. The magnitude of later services somewhat dwarfed what he did in Afghanistan ; but the good stuff of which he was made was very apparent at this time, and it was plain that there was a great future before him.

After the return of the armies to the British provinces, there was a brief interval, during which it appeared that the good services which Lawrence had rendered to his country were not likely to meet with adequate reward. He fell back upon his Political Assistantship on the Frontier, and at one time, suffering from ill health, was anxious to return to England. "I am very busy," he wrote in August, "having two districts, Khytul and Umballah, and being employed in the Revenue settlement of the former. Like many others, I was disappointed at the distribution of honours ; in fact, it

1842—44. would seem to have been supposed I was a kind of Assistant in the Commissariat Department to Mackeson. However, the least said the soonest mended, so I have tried to hold my tongue, and should be now packing up my traps for England but for my Peshawur accounts, not an item of which has yet been passed. So I suppose I must fag away here for another year on the same pay as when I went to Peshawur, being less than if I were with the regiment."

The Nepaul
Residency.

Better days, however, were now about to dawn upon him. After a while, Lord Ellenborough selected him to fill the important and well-salaried office of Resident at the Court of Nepaul. There was not much active work to be done at Katamandoo. It was the duty of the Resident, at that time, rather to wait and watch, than to interfere overmuch in the affairs of the Nepaul Durbar. So Henry Lawrence, at this period of his career, had more time professionally unoccupied than at any other. That he would turn it to good account in one way or another was certain. The way was soon determined by an accident. It had occurred to me, then residing in Calcutta, to establish a review, similar in form and character to the *Edinburgh*, the *Quarterly*, and the *Westminster* Reviews, but devoted entirely to Indian subjects and questions. It was a bold and seemingly a hopeless experiment, and I expected that it would last out a few numbers and then die, leaving me perhaps a poorer man than before. Its success astonished no one more than myself. That it did succeed is, in no small measure, attributable to the strenuous support of Henry Lawrence. It was precisely the organ for which he had long been wishing as a vehicle for the expression of his thoughts; and perhaps his kindly heart was moved to take a stronger interest in it by the fact that it was the project and under the peculiar care of one who had once been a brother-officer in the same distinguished corps, though at that time we had never met.* As soon as he heard of my intention to start the *Calcutta Review*, he promised to contribute to every number. The first number was too far advanced for me to avail myself

* Henry Lawrence had before this time contributed to some of the up-country journals, especially to the *Delhi Gazette*, in which he published a series of most interesting papers, under the title of the "Adventurer in the Punjab," in which truth was blended with fiction. They were afterwards published by Mr. Colburn, with the author's name on the title-page.

1844.

of his aid. To this number Dr. Duff contributed one article; Captain Marsh, of the Bengal Cavalry, an earnest-minded and singularly-gifted man, contributed another; and the editor wrote all the rest. To the second number Henry Lawrence contributed a long and very interesting chapter of Punjabee history; the other contributors, besides the editor, being Mr. Marshman, of the *Friend of India*, now so honourably known to European literature by his *History of the Serampore Mission*, and his excellent *Life of Havelock*; Dr. Duff, and his colleague, the Rev. Thomas Smith. After this, Lawrence's contributions became more numerous. He generally furnished two or three papers to each number of the Review. His fertility, indeed, was marvellous. I have a letter before me, in which he undertook to supply to one number four articles, comprising a hundred and ten pages. His contributions were gravid with matter of the best kind—important facts accompanied by weighty opinions and wise suggestions. But he was always deploring, and not without reason, his want of literary skill. This want would have been a sore trial to an editor, if it had not been accompanied by the self-knowledge of which I have spoken. There was, indeed, a charming candour and modesty about him as a writer: an utter absence of vanity, opinionativeness, and sensitive egotism about small things. He was eager in his exhortations to the editor to “cut and prune.” He tried hard to improve his style, and wrote that with this object he had been reading Macaulay's Essays and studying Lindley Murray. On one occasion, but one only, he was vexed by the manner in which the editorial authority had been exercised. In an article on the “Military Defence of our Indian Empire,” which, seen by the light of subsequent events, has quite a flush of prophecy upon it, he had insisted, more strongly than the editor liked at the time, on the duty of a Government being at all times prepared for war. Certain events, then painfully fresh in the public mind, had given the editor somewhat ultra-pacific tendencies, and in the course of the correspondence he must have expressed his opinions over-strongly, by applying the epithet “abominable” to certain doctrines which Lawrence held more in favour. “When you know me better,” he wrote in reply, “you will not think that I can advocate anything

1844.

abominable." And nothing was more true. The contributor was right, and the editor was wrong. But although Lawrence was properly tenacious of his principles, he was, as I have said, very modest in his estimate of his style, and as his handwriting was not the most legible in the world, and as the copyists whom he tried only made matters worse, there was sometimes ludicrous confusion in his sentences as they came from the hands of the native printer. But, full of solid information as they ever were, the articles more than repaid any amount of editorial trouble, and when they appeared, were generally the most popular contributions to each number of the Review. He continued to the end of his life to contribute at intervals to this publication, and was, when the rebellion of 1857 broke out, employed on a review of the "Life of Sir John Malcolm," which he never lived to complete.

In his literary labours at this time Henry Lawrence was greatly assisted by his admirable wife, who not only aided him in the collection and arrangement of such of his facts as he culled from books, and often helped him to put his sentences in order, but sometimes wrote articles of her own, distinguished by no little literary ability, but still more valuable for the good womanly feeling that imbued them. Ever earnest in her desire to promote the welfare of others, she strove to incite her country-women in India to higher aims, and to stimulate them to larger activities. In her writings, indeed, she generally appealed to her own sex, with a winning tenderness and charity, as one knowing well the besetting weaknesses of humanity and the especial temptations to indolence and self-indulgence in such a country as India. And so, when not interrupted by ill health, as sometimes happened, these two worked on happily together in their Nepaul home; and seldom or never did a week pass without bringing me, as I laboured on in Calcutta, a bulky packet of manuscript from one or other—or both.

And I do not dwell upon this because there is to me a pleasure—though now, as both have passed away, a mournful pleasure—in such retrospects, but because the literary activity thus strongly developed was, in truth, a very important circumstance in Henry Lawrence's career. It happened that at this time the Punjab was in a state of extraordinary

commotion. There had been a succession of sanguinary revolutions. One ruler after another had been swept away by the hand of the assassin, and as the Government had grown weaker and weaker, the army had waxed stronger and more insolent, until at last the military power thoroughly overbore the State. That in this condition of affairs the lawless prætorian bands, who had long been vapouring about marching down to the sack of Delhi and the pillage of Calcutta, would some day cross the Sutlej and attempt to carry their threats into execution, had now become almost a certainty. The British and the Sikh powers were about to come into collision, and it behoved our rulers, therefore, to think well of the work before them, and to learn all that could be learnt regarding the country and the people with whom, whether in peace or war, for good or for evil, we were now about to be nearly connected. The best and the freshest information on the subject was to be found in Lawrence's articles in the *Calcutta Review*. The Governor-General, Sir Henry Hardinge, read them with great interest and attention, and saw at once that the writer possessed that practical knowledge of men and things that, in the conjuncture then approaching, would render him an invaluable auxiliary, and he longed for an opportunity to call Lawrence to his presence. In this he differed, honourably, as I think, from many others in the same high station, whose prejudices have set in strongly against men known or suspected of being "connected with the Press." He did not see that a public officer, who, brimful of knowledge, desired not to confine the exposition of it wholly to official documents, was less likely to prove a trustworthy servant of the State. So, as I have said, having learnt from Lawrence's articles how much he knew about the Punjab, Hardinge was anxious to employ him in that part of the country. 1844—45.

The opportunity was not long wanting. From his pleasant retirement, from his library, his review-writing, from the dear companionship of his wife, Henry Lawrence was summoned, as the new year dawned, to the north-western frontier. The Punjab was in a blaze; the Sikh army, after much vapour- The first Sikh war. 1846.

1846.

ing and vaunting, had crossed the Sutlej; and the Commander-in-Chief, with the Governor-General as his second in command, had fought two bloody battles, crowned by no more than dubious victories. On those hard-fought fields the two chief political officers of the British Government, Broadfoot and Nicolson, had been killed; and the choice of the Governor-General had fallen upon Henry Lawrence, as the man who seemed to be best fitted to take the direction of the diplomacies of the frontier.* This was indeed a spirit-stirring summons, and one which was responded to with an alacrity which overcame all obstacles; and ere the Sikh and British armies again came into hostile collision, Henry Lawrence was in the camp of the Governor-General. He saw the great battle of Sobraon fought—that battle upon which turned the fortune of the empire of Runjit Singh. It was a battle not only hotly contested, but fairly fought. It was said afterwards that some of the leading Sikh chiefs had betrayed their countrymen, and sold the battle to the English. I know how this unworthy imputation grieved the spirit of Lord Hardinge, for he was a man of a noble nature, and incapable of conniving at an act of baseness. That the charge was untrue, History may now, after the lapse of twenty years, solemnly declare. If any man had a right to speak on such a subject, it was Henry Lawrence; for the negotiations must have been carried on through him, as our chief diplomatic agent. His denial of this treachery was ever most emphatic. “Let me,” he wrote to the author of this Memoir some years afterwards, “in opposition to Cunninghame, Smyth, and the whole Indian press, distinctly state that Ferozshuhur, Sobraon, and the road to Lahore, were not bought; that at least there was no treachery that I ever heard of; that though I was with the army as political agent twenty days before the battle of Sobraon, I had no communication whatever with Tej Singh until we reached Lahore; and that although Lal Singh had an agent with me, he (Lal Singh) sent me no message, and

* The choice lay between Major Mackeson and Major Lawrence. It is worthy of remark that Mackeson—a gallant, noble fellow, who was afterwards assassinated on the Punjabee frontier—had, as he wrote to me once, an “extreme dislike to be supposed to communicate with any public writer.” He thought it would be injurious to his prospects. But I know that the choice went in favour of Lawrence because he had communicated with public writers.

1846.

did nothing that could distinguish him from any other leader of the enemy.”*

The battle of Sobraon having been fought and won, there were those in the camp of the Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief who believed that the war was only then commenced, and that it would be necessary to march into the Punjab with a large army and a train of two hundred guns for the siege and capture of Lahore and Umritsur—the one the temporal, the other the spiritual, capital of the Sikh Empire. But Henry Lawrence told the Governor-General that the war was over; that there would not be another shot fired.† The portfolio was now to be opened, and our policy worked out in peace. And he was right. The policy was a policy of moderation and forbearance, not wanting either in worldly wisdom. The seizure of the Punjab and its incorporation with the British dominions, at that time, though insisted upon by many, then and afterwards, as a thing that ought to have been done, would not have been just if it had been practicable, and would not have been practicable if it had been just. It was, in fact, neither the one nor the other; so Henry Lawrence counselled not the annexation of the Punjab, but the reconstruction of the Sikh Government, fenced in and fortified by British bayonets.

But the materials from which the edifice was to have been built were utterly rotten, and the experiment was a failure.

* I may add here, that Lord Hardinge most emphatically and indignantly denied this assertion, as he narrated to me, in minute detail, some years afterwards at South Park, all the circumstances of this memorable war. If it was done, it was strange, indeed, that neither Lord Hardinge nor Sir Henry Lawrence knew anything about it. Both were men of the highest honour; and I cannot believe that either told me an untruth.

† See the following, from a letter to the author: “Sir Charles Napier and many others thought it was most dangerous to hold the city of Lahore with ten thousand men. I was one of the few about Lord Hardinge that told him the war was over; that there would not be another shot fired in working out

the policy intended. Irvine, Frederick Abbott, and Benson said we ought not to cross the Sutlej with less than two hundred heavy guns for the siege of Lahore and Umritsur. I said I did not expect that either would stand a siege, and that I was sure both would not. Sir Charles Napier’s fancy campaign, as given in the book on the Sindh Administration, would have had no effect on the war. Had Sobraon been lost, any success of his would have been useless, and he himself in the Punjab would have been unsafe, while Delhi would have been exposed. Annexation *has* been peaceably effected, but we have no right to suppose that it could have been so in 1846, especially if Gholab Singh had been opposed to us.”

1846.

All through the year 1846 it was gradually, but certainly, going to pieces. During that year Henry Lawrence held the post of "Resident" at Lahore; but he was not one to sit idly at the capital, when there was active work to be done in which his personal influence might be turned to good account. He spent three months at Lahore, keeping, by the exercise of that rare union of gentleness and vigour which distinguished his character, the turbulent elements of its varied population in control, and on one occasion at least being in danger of losing his life,* at the hands of a fanatical and excited population. This was in April, 1846. In the following month he was journeying in advance of a British force towards the almost inaccessible heights of Kote-Kangra. "Kangra," he wrote to me, "is a Gibraltar. It is five miles round, and has one accessible point, which is defended by thirteen gates, one within the other." This fortress stood within the line of a tract of country which the Sikh Government had undertaken by treaty to surrender to the British; but the Sikh commandant, moved by the fine old nationality of the Khalsa, declared that he would hold out to the last, unless Runjit Singh himself appeared, to demand from him the keys of the place. But there was no point which the Bengal Artillery could not reach; and before the end of the month of May, aided by the appliances of elephant draught, our heavy guns had toiled up the formidable ascent of that precipitate rock, and the fortress was surrendered without a siege.

The transfer of
Cashmere.

Another memorable incident of this period of Lawrence's career was his visit to Cashmere—the country of Gholab Singh—a country which he had before much studied and written about, and had long desired to see with his fleshly eye as he had comprehended it with the eye of his imagination. Briefly stated, the story of Cashmere is this: At the close of the first Sikh war, whilst still there was a hope of

* This was an outburst of indignant Brahminism occasioned by the killing of kine for the use of the British troops. But for the extreme forbearance of Colonel Lawrence, who would not suffer his escort to fire a shot, there would probably have been a massacre. Writing to the biographer, some time afterwards, Lawrence said: "I look upon it that what did much to ensure the peace of

the town of Lahore in 1846 was my hanging the Brahmin ringleader of the Cow Row in April, 1846, when the shops of the city were shut, and Macgregor, Edwardes, and I were brickbatted. I doubt if the first day at Caubul presented a worse aspect than Lahore did that day, when the streets swarmed with armed men attempting to kill us."

1846.

sustaining the empire founded by Runjit Singh, it was decreed in common course by the victors that the expenses of the war should be paid by the vanquished. In India such payments are more frequently made in land than in money; so it was agreed that the province of Cashmere should be made over to the British Government in full settlement of the war-charges. But for the English to hold Cashmere whilst the Punjab was still an independent state, was clearly impossible; so as they had accepted it, in place of a million of money, it was made over to Gholab Singh, the great Jummoo chief, who held much of the country contiguous to Cashmere, on his payment of that sum. But the Sikh governor of Cashmere was by no means willing to be thus summarily expelled, and he hoisted, therefore, the colours of what we are wont to call rebellion. Henry Lawrence was a man of large and liberal sympathies; and perhaps he may have seen something like nationality in the resistance. But the crisis was one not to be trifled with; he saw clearly how much depended on vigorous and successful action. A body of Sikh troops—the very men who had so recently been in deadly conflict with the British—was to be sent into Cashmere to coerce the recusant governor, and to make over the country to Gholab Singh. With this force Henry Lawrence determined to go himself, that he might throw all the moral weight of the Government which he represented into the scales on the side of the new ruler. There was danger in front of him as he went, and he left danger behind him at Lahore; for it was certain that the Minister, Lal Singh, sympathised with the rebels, if he had not actually instigated the rebellion. It was no improbable contingency that, with all this treachery in high places, the hazardous service which Henry Lawrence had undertaken would cost him his life. But he caused it to be quietly made known to the Minister that, if any injury should befall him, his brother John, who was left in charge of British interests at the Sikh capital, would cause Lal Singh to be seized and imprisoned. The hint was not without the anticipated effect. Colonel Lawrence, having done his work, returned in safety to Lahore. He had turned his hazardous journey to the best possible account; for not only had its declared political objects been accomplished, but he obtained,

1846. for the best purposes of humanity, a moral influence over Gholab Singh, the good effects of which were of an abiding character. It is altogether one of the most remarkable incidents on record of the moral power which such a man as Lawrence may exercise over the Princes of India. He induced the great Jummoo chief to abolish Suttee, female infanticide, and slavery, throughout his dominions. And he so interested the Rajah in his great project of the Asylum on the hills for the children of the European soldiery, that the Hindoo chief eagerly offered to contribute largely to the scheme, and by his munificence helped to bring it to perfection.

The Council of
Regency.

When Colonel Lawrence returned to Lahore, there was stirring work before him at the Sikh capital. The treachery of Lal Singh had been placed beyond all doubt; and Lord Hardinge, having determined that his conduct should be subjected to formal investigation, deputed his Political Secretary, Mr. Currie,* to Lahore, to bring the matter to its legitimate conclusion. All the principal chiefs expressed themselves anxious that the investigation should be conducted by British officers. So a court was constituted, composed of Mr. Currie, as President, with Henry and John Lawrence, General Littler, and Colonel Goldie as members. Sixty-five chiefs were present during the investigation. The guilt of the Wuzeer was clearly established; and he was taken out of the court a prisoner by Sikh soldiers, who a few hours before had been members of his own body-guard. A new form of government was now to be established. A Council of Regency was instituted, composed of eight leading Sikh chiefs, "acting under the control and guidance of the British Resident." The power of the Resident was "to extend over every department and to any extent." He was to have "unlimited authority in all matters of internal administration and external relations, during the minority of the Maharajah." In other words, the British Resident was to be virtually the ruler of the Punjab. It was little less than the mantle of kingly power that was now to descend upon Henry Lawrence.

And truly was the sway that he exercised, in all respects, most benevolent in intention, and, in many, most beneficent in

* Now (1866) Sir Frederick Currie, Bart., member of the Council of India.

1847.

effect. If Lawrence, and those who worked under him at this time, ever promoting great schemes for the improvement of the administration of the country, were guilty of any error, it was this—that they were over-active in their humanity, and too sudden in their reforms. So Lawrence himself thought at a later date. Writing to me on the subject a few years afterwards, he said: “Looking back on our Regency career, my chief regrets are that we did so much. I and my assistants laboured zealously for the good of the country and the good of the people of all ranks, but we were ill supported by a venal and selfish Durbar, and were therefore gradually obliged to come forward more than I wished, and to act directly where I desired to do so only by advice, as honestly anxious to prepare the Durbar to manage the country themselves. The basis of our arrangements, however, was: first, the reduction of the army to the lowest number required to defend the frontier and preserve internal peace, and to pay that army punctually; second, to strike off the most obnoxious taxes, and, as far as possible, to equalise and moderate the assessment of the country, and ensure what was collected reaching the public treasury; thirdly, to have a *very* simple code of laws, founded on the Sikh customs, reduced to writing, and administered by the most respectable men from their own ranks. For this purpose I had for some months at Lahore fifty Sikh heads of villages, greybeards assembled under Sirdar Lena Singh’s eye, and they did prepare the code just before I left Lahore for England. . . . I must have employed the chiefs, or imprisoned or banished them, and as ~~they~~ had behaved well to me, I was in justice obliged to do the first. Gradually I could have weeded the ranks. At Peshawur I had got an old officer, faithful to the utmost; in a year or two I might have got similar men at other points. My brother George and old General Gholab Singh did wonders at Peshawur, and for six months kept matters straight there. I fear if the same game were to be played over again, and we took six months to recover Mooltan from a disaffected chief or officer in this year 1852, that our own troops at Peshawur, in the absence of European force, could hardly be restrained from acting as the Sikh army did. No, we cannot afford in India to shilly-shally, and talk

1847.

of weather and seasons. If we are not ready to take the field at all seasons, we have no business here. I was very fortunate in my assistants, *all of whom were my friends*, and almost every one of whom were introduced into the Punjab through me. George Lawrence, Macgregor, James Abbott, Edwardes, Lumsden, Nicholson, Taylor, Cocks, Hodson, Pollock, Bowring, Henry Coxe, and Melvill, are men such as you will seldom find anywhere, but when collected under one administration were worth double and treble the number taken at hap-hazard. Each was a good man; the most were excellent officers. My chief help, however, was in my brother John, without whom I should have had difficulty in carrying on. On three different occasions during my temporary absence he took charge for me; the first being the ticklish occasion when I took the Sikh army to Cashmere, and when I was obliged to tell Lal Singh's Wakeel that if anything happened to me, John Lawrence was told to put the Rajah (Lal Singh) in confinement. The fact was, I knew he was acting treacherously, but trusted to carrying the thing through by expedition, and by the conviction that the British army, which I had got General Littler to take into the field, was in our rear to support or avenge us. In various ways John Lawrence was most useful, and gave me always such help as only a Brother could."

In this necessarily brief record of a good man's career, there is some fear lest, as I advance, the history of Henry Lawrence's charities should be overborne by the more stirring incidents of his active life. It may, therefore, be set down here that the long-cherished design of establishing at a healthy hill station an asylum for the children of our European soldiery was fully realised, and that from this time he began to see the good fruits of his beneficence fairly before him. How many healthy and happy children, now grown or growing into useful members of society, have had reason to bless the name of the man who shared his prosperity with them! He had now abundant means of doing good, and he gave unstintingly from his worldly store, exciting others, by his great example, to do likewise. So the Lawrence Asylum flourished—a great fact—and grew in usefulness as its founder grew in years; until, when his work was done, the Government did honour

to his memory by adopting it as their own, and providing for it at the public expense.

1847.

So all through the year 1847 Henry Lawrence worked on as Chief of the Council of Regency. There was then what appeared to be a lull; the Punjab was outwardly quiet; and so, as his health had been much shattered by the work of the last few years, he was counselled to resort to the only effectual remedy—a visit to his fatherland. His wife, who had been driven home some time before, was turning her opportunities to good account in making arrangements for the superintendence of the Lawrence Asylum; and he was most anxious to join her. Moreover, the Governor-General, now Lord Hardinge, was turning his face homewards, and had asked Lawrence to accompany him. There was no man in all India whom that fine old soldier more admired or more trusted; no one beyond his own family circle whom he more dearly loved. The affection was reciprocal. If inducement had been wanting, the invitation thus given to Lawrence to become the travelling companion of his honoured chief, would have rendered the measure of his temptations irresistible. As it was, his sense of duty, his strong conjugal affection, and his devotion to the best of leaders, all lured him away for a time from the destroying climate of the East. The great year of revolutions had dawned upon Europe when Hardinge and Lawrence traversed the Continent and confronted the first gatherings of the storm. But without accident or interruption they reached England—to the younger man almost a new, and quite a strange world, for he had not seen it since his boyhood, and he was then in his forty-second year.

1848.

There were those who, then seeing him for the first time, were struck by the remarkable simplicity and unworldliness of his character. No man ever cared less for external appearances. There was no impatience, no defiance of the small conventionalities of life, no studied eccentricity of any kind, but his active mind, ever intent upon great realities, overleapt the social surroundings of the moment. I well remember how, on the day after his arrival in London, as we walked up Regent-street together, and met the usual afternoon tide of

Visit to
England.

1848. well-dressed people, he turned upon me an amused and puzzled look, and saying, with a humorous smile, that all those fine people must look upon him as "a great guy," asked if there was any place near, at which he could purchase an overcoat or cloak to hide the imperfections of his attire. It had dawned upon him that in his antiquated frock-coat, and the old grey shepherd's plaid crossed over his chest, he was very much unlike other people; and as a few paces onward brought us in front of Nicol's great shop, he had soon exchanged his plaid for a fashionable paletot, and asked me "if that was something more like the thing?" I do not think that he cared much more for titles than he cared for dress. When, shortly after his return to England, the Queen, on the recommendation of Lord Hardinge, appointed him a Knight Commander of the Bath, though he rejoiced, as a loyal and devoted subject, in his sovereign's recognition of the work he had done, he appeared to be in no hurry to adopt the new prefix to his name, but rather to cling to his old designation of "Colonel Lawrence." For general society he had no taste, and he was glad, therefore, to escape from the bustle and excitement of the capital, and to seek restored health in the country, and happiness in the companionship of the nearest and dearest of his friends.

But it was permitted to him to enjoy only a brief season of repose. Before the trees were bare in that memorable year 1848, news had arrived from India which stirred the very depths of his nature, and prompted him again to be up and doing. The Punjab was again in a blaze. The forbearance of the British Government had been exercised in vain. The experiment of a Council of Regency had failed, and once again there was an appeal to the stern arbitrament of the sword. When the first intelligence of the rebellion of Moolraj and of the murder of Vans-Agnew and Anderson at Mooltan reached London, Lawrence came to me greatly excited, to ask what papers and letters I had received. I shall never forget the expression of his face and the eagerness of his manner as, now and then breaking into brief emphatic comments, he read the details which I was enabled to place before him. "I should have sent Arthur Cocks," he said; "a steady, cool-headed fellow, but full of courage. John and I had settled

1848.

it between us before I left." "I wish I had been there," he added, "I would have gone to Mooltan after the outbreak myself." He said that the place could not hold out against British artillery—in which the event proved that he was wrong; and, judging only by the limited intelligence then before us, he thought that the rebellion would be put down by the Sikhs themselves, without the help of our British troops.* But it soon became apparent that we had not to contend with the rebellion of a provincial governor but with a rising of the whole nation.

Then Henry Lawrence felt that his proper place was where the war was raging.† He had not yet regained his health. Loving friends and wise physicians alike counselled him that there was danger in a precipitate return to India; but he knew that there would have been greater danger in a protracted sojourn in England, for inactive at such a time, he would have chafed himself to death—beaten his very life out against the bars of his cage. Still it was a hazardous experiment upon the physical capacities of his shattered frame; and when I bade him farewell on the platform of the Southampton Railway, I felt that there was nothing, under Providence, to carry him through the work before him but the invigorating and sustaining power of the work itself, the strong mind re-

Return to the Punjab.

* He wrote this also to me, on, I think, the afternoon of the same day: "I don't believe that a British soldier will leave Lahore, and I am sure they ought not to do so. The Sikhs and Politicals ought to have it all to themselves. . . . The fort, however strong against Runjit Singh, would not stand three days against us even with nine-pounders. No intelligence has been received at the India House, as I gather from a note of this morning from Lord Hardinge."

† Lawrence himself has told the official history of this—how he was "permitted to return to his duty" by the Court of Directors. "On the breaking out of the second Sikh war," he wrote in the *Calcutta Review*, 1854, "the President of the Board of Control, desiring that I should see the Duke of Wellington, procured me an audience. It ended in his Grace's saying that I ought to return to the Punjab. I expressed my readiness, and wrote to the

Court offering to go at once. They replied, politely ignoring me, and leaving me to act on my own judgment, as I was on medical certificate. I was disappointed, but perceived no hostility in the Court's act." This may be compared with the famous answer given to Sir Charles Metcalfe, on which I have commented at page 433, vol. i. The Court were no "respecters of persons." A very distinguished member of the Indian Civil Service, who had been selected for high office under the Crown, told me of the disappointment which he experienced when, on tendering his resignation to the Court, he received in reply a letter baldly announcing that his resignation was accepted. There was neither a word of regret nor a word of praise in the communication. Knowing the general character of the Court's communications, I should have been greatly surprised if there had been. The Company was a good master, but very chary of gracious words.

1849.

pairing the waste of the feeble body. And so it was. Before the end of the year he was at Mooltan, whence he pushed on to the camp of the Commander-in-Chief, and arrived to see the disastrous battle of Chillianwallah fought by the British and Sikh armies.* He held no recognised position there, civil or military, but he rendered by his presence an important service to the State; for a few words spoken by him at the right time saved the military commander from committing a stupendous error. After the battle, which both sides claimed to have won, Lord Gough proposed to withdraw his army some five or six miles from the scene of action, for the sake of obtaining better fodder for his cattle. Against this Henry Lawrence warmly protested, saying that if the British fell back at such a time, even a single mile, the Sikhs would accept the fact as an evidence of our defeat, and take new heart and courage from our retrograde movements. Nay, more; it might be said from one end of India to the other, that the English had retired beaten from the contest in confusion and dismay. These arguments prevailed; the British army remained on its old encamping-ground, and at worst it could only be said that there was a drawn battle.

It need not be told in this place how the errors and disasters of Chillianwallah were retrieved by the crowning action of Goojerat, which placed the Punjab at the feet of the English conqueror. Sir Henry Lawrence had by this time resumed his post as Resident at Lahore, and plainly now there was great work before him. But what was to be the immediate result of conquest? As the decision rested with the Governor-General of India, and Lord Dalhousie was that Governor-General, there could be little doubt of the answer to be given to the question. Indeed, ever since the Sikh Sirdars had drawn the sword against us, and thus proclaimed the failure of our half measures, good and wise as they were, it seemed that there could be but one issue of the war. Few men could see any other possible solution of the difficulty than the annexa-

* Writing to me from the Governor-General's camp on the 22nd of January, he said: "I left Mooltan on the 9th of the month. Fancy the wretched state of the dawks, when I say that I brought the news of the capture of the town to

Lord Dalhousie. . . . I am to take charge on the 1st of February, and in the interim I am doing what I can. I hope I was useful both at Mooltan and with the Commander-in-Chief."

tion of the Punjab; but among those few was Henry Lawrence. "I am sorry," he wrote to me from the Governor-General's camp, "that you have taken up the annexation cry. It may now, after all that has happened, be in strictness just; but it certainly is not expedient, and it is only lately that I have been able to bring myself to see its justice." But the Punjab was annexed; the empire of Runjit Singh became British territory; and from that time the name of Lawrence was indissolubly associated with the government of our great new province.

1849.

The affairs of the Punjab were now to be administered under the superintendence of a Board, of which Sir Henry Lawrence was to be President. Associated with him were his brother, Mr. John Lawrence, then a rising civilian on the Bengal Establishment, and Mr. Mansel, of the same service. Under the controlling authority of these able and experienced men were a number of younger officers of mark and likelihood, many of whom have since risen to distinction. Never was a difficult task more successfully accomplished. All the turbulent elements of Punjabee society were now to be reduced to quietude and serenity; out of chaos was to be evolved order; out of anarchy and ruin, peace and prosperity. Since the death of Runjit Singh, there had been no government in the Punjab with the strong hand by which alone all classes could be kept in due subordination to each other; and the soldiery had therefore been dominant in the State. Their power was now broken; for the most part, indeed, their occupation was gone. But hence the danger of "disbanded soldiers; factions grown desperate;" and the great question was how these prætorian bands, and the Sirdars, or privileged classes, were to be dealt with by the new Government. If there was one man in the country better qualified than all others to solve in practice that great question, it was Henry Lawrence; for with courage and resolution of the highest order, were combined within him the large sympathy and the catholic toleration of a generous heart. He could feel for those who were stricken down by the strong arm of the stranger, even though they had drawn the sword against us—feel as a man may feel

The Lahore
Board of
Administra-
tion.

1849. when another stronger than he cometh and taketh all that he hath. So he tried to deal tenderly with the Sikh chiefs in their fallen fortunes, and to provide honourable employment for as many as could be brought into the service of the new Christian Government. What he did in this way, and how he wrought mightily to make British rule a blessing to the people, may be best told by himself. Whatsoever might have been his opinions on the subject of annexation, he said truly that he "had worked honestly to carry out the policy ordained." The many-sidedness of that work cannot be better illustrated than by the following extract from a letter he wrote to me from Lahore, after he had been for some three years at the head of the Board of Administration. In it we see epitomised a history of British progress in the East—we see the manner in which men reared under that great "monarchy of the middle classes," which so long held India as its own, did, by dint of a benevolence that never failed, an energy that never tired, and a courage which never faltered, let what might be the difficulties to be faced, or the responsibilities to be assumed, achieve those vast successes which are the historical wonders of the world.

"It has been our aim," wrote Sir Henry Lawrence, after giving an account of the machinery of administration, "to get as many natives of the Punjab as possible into office; but as yet it is up-hill work, as the Punjabees are not acquainted with forms and rules, which are unfortunately thought too much of, though happily not so much so as in the Provinces. We wish to make the basis of our rule a light and equable assessment; a strong and vigorous, though uninterfering police, and a quiet hearing in all civil and other cases. We are, therefore, pushing on the Revenue Survey (you know I was for several years a revenue surveyor) and the Revised Settlement. We have hunted down all the Dacoits. During the first year we hanged nearly a hundred, six and eight at a time, and thereby struck such a terror that Dacoitee is now more rare than in any part of India. In civil justice we have not been so successful, or in putting down petty crime, but we are striving hard to simplify matters, and bring justice home to the poor. In seven years we shall have a splendid canal, with four great branches from the hills close down to Mooltan, and in two years we shall have a magnificent trunk

road to Peshawur, and in every direction we are making cross-roads (in the Lahore district there are eight hundred miles of new road), and in many quarters small inundation canals have been opened out or old ones repaired. Colonel Napier,* our civil engineer, is our great man in this department. The defence of the frontier alone has been no small work, considering we have done it in spite of Sir Charles Napier. We have raised five regiments of as fine cavalry as any in India, and as many corps of splendid infantry, also six regiments of very good military police, and two thousand seven hundred cavalry police in separate troops. These irregulars and military police have kept the peace of the country; the regulars being in reserve. There are, besides these, the ordinary Thannah police, employed as detectives and on ordinary occasions. They may amount to six thousand men. Not one shot has been fired *within* the Punjab since annexation. The revenue has been reduced by the summary assessments about thirty lakhs, or twenty-five per cent., on the whole; varying from five and ten to fifty per cent. The poorer classes have reason to be thankful. Not so the sirdars, and those who used to get employment under the Durbar. Of these, hundreds, perhaps thousands, are out of employ. Liberal life-pensions have been granted; but still there is distress in the higher circles, especially where parties were connected with the outbreak. In the Punjab there is not much less than twenty-five lakhs of jagheer, nearly all of which has been inquired into and reported. In this department we have done more in three years than was done in fifty years in the North-West Provinces. Perhaps I expedited matters by prohibiting in the Cis- and Trans-Sutlej in 1846 any resumption until the case was reported and orders issued. This was reversing what some of our officers wished, viz. first to resume and then to inquire, perhaps ten or twenty years afterwards! We have planted thousands of trees, so that in a few years the reproach of want of verdure will be wiped off. Serais are at every stage on our new main roads, and police posts at every two or three miles. We are inquiring into education, and have got up a good English and vernacular school at Umritsur, where one hundred and sixty boys and

* Now (1866) Sir Robert Napier, Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay Army.

1849—52. men attend, many of whom already speak and write English. I am very anxious to extend vernacular education, and to educate Punjabees for the public service, for engineering, and for medical and surgical offices. . . . I have been twice all round the Punjab, visiting every station, and staying at each a few days. I have not missed one; and though I have not travelled in the usual style of Indian governors, or indeed in the style of most Collectors, I have managed to see everything, from the bottom of the salt mines at Pindadun-khan and Kohat, to Ladakh and Ishardo, on Gholab Singh's northern frontier. Each year I have travelled three or four months, each day riding usually thirty or forty miles, with light tents, and sometimes for days with none at all. Thus I last cold weather rode close round all the frontier, visiting every point of interest, and all our posts, small and great, and riding through most of the passes, from Huzara, by Yuyufzye, Peshawur, Kohat, and the Derajat, down to the Sindh Border. Each day we marched fifteen or twenty miles, sending tents on direct to the next ground, and ourselves riding long circuits, or from the new ground visiting points right or left. At stations, or where anything was going on, we halted one, two, or three days, visiting the public offices, gaols, bazaars, &c., receiving visitors of all ranks, and inspecting the Punjab regiments and police, and receiving petitions, which latter were a daily occurrence, sometimes a couple of hundred coming in. Whatever errors have been committed," he said, with characteristic frankness, in the same letter, "have been, I think, from attempting too much—from too soon putting down the native system, before we were prepared for a better."* This, indeed, was an error into which the English in India were somewhat prone to fall, especially at times when it was the fashion to see in native systems and usages only unmixed evil.

Upon such men as Henry Lawrence, work of this kind had

* I must necessarily, in a brief sketch of this kind, leave very much unsaid that it would be pleasant to write and profitable to read. A volume might be written—indeed has been written—about this Punjabee Administration. There is no part of Lawrence's career with which the public are more familiar. It

may be noted here that he has himself written a vigorous defence of his administration, in reply to some objurgatory comments of Charles and William Napier. It appeared, with his name attached to it, in the *Calcutta Review*, vol. xxii.; and is full of interesting autobiographical details.

1849—52.

ever a bracing and invigorating effect. He could toil early and late, so long as he was conscious of the ability to do good, and could feel that he was in his right place. But even whilst he was thus taking stock of past and estimating future beneficences, a heavy cloud was rising which soon overshadowed the serenity of his mind. Although never perhaps had a little band of English administrators done so much good within so short a space of time, there was something in the machinery of the administration which the Governor-General did not wholly like. He thought that it would be better if at the head of the Government of the Punjab there were, not a Board of three Commissioners, but a single Commissioner with undivided authority. Perhaps, if all the members of the Board had been like-minded, and the image of their minds had been a reflexion of his own, Lord Dalhousie might not have been so eager to change the system. But there were fundamental diversities of opinion on some important questions, and the Board did not therefore work very harmoniously in itself, nor in all respects concordantly with the views of the Governor-General. The fact was, that the chivalrous spirit of Henry Lawrence was grieved by the prostration of the Sikh nobility and the ruin of the privileged classes, and that he was fain to lend them, when he could, a helping hand in the hour of their need. And he did so; too liberally to gain the full concurrence of his brother, or the approval of Lord Dalhousie. The conflict in such a case as this is commonly between the head and the heart. Henry Lawrence felt, Lord Dalhousie thought; the one sympathised, the other reasoned. It is doubtless an evil of no small magnitude, that when by the strong arm of conquest, or by the more delicate manipulations of diplomacy, we gain possession of an Indian principality, we find ourselves with the entire responsibilities of the government on our hands, and yet, owing to the number of importunate claims to be heard, and vested interests to be considered, only, if we are compassionate, a portion of the revenues at our disposal for purposes of administration. To have money in the treasury is to have the means of doing good; and it was argued, with some show of reason, that it was not right to injure the many for the benefit of the few. If so much revenue were alienated in the shape of grants of rent-free land, or pecuniary pensions,

1852—53. the amount must be made good from some source or other—either from the particular revenues of the province, or from the general revenues of the empire. The tax-paying community, somewhere or other, must suffer, in order that a liberal provision may be made for the old aristocracy of the land. Thus Mr. John Lawrence argued; thus Lord Dalhousie argued. Moreover, with the latter it was a great point to prove that the Punjab was a profitable possession. But Henry Lawrence could sympathise with all classes; and he could plainly see that, even on economical grounds, it is sound policy, on the first establishment of our rule in a new country, to conciliate the native aristocracy. “So many overthrown estates,” says Bacon, “so many votes for troubles.” Internal peace and order are economical in the long run, though the contentment to which they are due be purchased in the first instance at a high price. This was the great point on which the brothers differed. Lord Dalhousie sided with John. When, therefore, the Board of Administration was sentenced to death, it was plain that Lord Dalhousie desired to place the supreme direction of affairs in the hands of the civilian, and to find a place for the soldier in another part of the country.

Henry Lawrence, therefore, offered to resign; John Lawrence did the same. The Governor-General unhesitatingly chose the latter, as the fitter agent of his policy; and the elder brother was appointed to represent British interests in the States of Rajpootana. Lord Dalhousie endeavoured to reconcile Henry Lawrence to this decision, by saying that the time had arrived when the business to be done was rather that of civil administration than of military or political government, and that, therefore, he had selected the civilian. But I think that this only added new venom to the poisoned dart that was festering in him. He was deeply and most painfully wounded. “I am now,” he said, “after twenty years of civil administration, and having held every sort of civil office, held up as wanting civil knowledge. . . . As for what Lord Dalhousie calls training, I had the best sort. I trained myself by hard work, by being put into charge of all sorts of offices, without help, and left to work my way. I have been for years a Judge, a Magistrate, a Collector; for two years a

Chief Commissioner, for five years President of the Board. I am at a loss to know what details I have yet to learn." But although he never ceased to feel that a great injustice had been done to him, he was sustained by that high sense of duty which was the guiding principle of his life; and he took large and liberal account, with all thankfulness, of the many blessings vouchsafed to him—the greatest of all being that he was so blessed in his domestic relations. 1853.

So Henry Lawrence turned his back upon the Punjab, and set forth on his way to Rajpootana. Once within the Rajpoot territory, he began his work. "On my way from Lahore," he wrote to me, "I went about right and left, paying flying visits to the chief cities of Rajpootana, as Jeypoor, Joudhpoor, Ulwar, Bhurtpore, &c., and have thereby been able to sit down quietly here ever since. On my rapid tour I visited, to the surprise of the Rajahs and political agents, all the gaols, or dens called gaols, and, by describing them since, I have got some hundreds of wretches released, and obtained better quarters and treatment. In the matter of gaol discipline the North-West Provinces are behind the Punjab, and even there every step taken by me was in direct opposition to almost every other authority." There was much work of all kinds to be done in Rajpootana—much of it very up-hill work. Traditionally the Rajpoots were a brave, a noble, a chivalrous race of men, but in fact there was but little nobility left in them. The strong hand of the British Government, which had yielded them protection and maintained them in peace, had enervated and enfeebled the national character, and had not nurtured the growth of any better qualities than those which it had subdued. They had ceased to be a race of warriors, and had become a race of debauchees. Sunk in sloth, grievously addicted to opium, they were not to be roused to energetic exertion of any kind; and where utter stagnation was not apparent, the tendency both of the governments and of the peoples was towards gradual retrocession in all that denoted enlightenment and civilisation. How to deal with these Rajpoots was a problem which had perplexed British statesmen before the days of Henry Lawrence; and

1853—54.

although he now addressed himself to its solution with all the earnestness of his nature, he was obliged to confess that he made little progress. "As is usual with me," he wrote after he had been some time in Rajpootana, "it has been a year of labour, for here I have had everything to learn. Heretofore I have had chiefly to do with one, and that a new people; here I have twenty sovereign States as old as the sun and moon, but with none of the freshness of either orb. My Sikh experience gives me very little help, and my residence in Nepaul scarcely any in dealing with the petty intrigues and foolish pride of these effete Rajpoots." "You are right," he wrote to me in June, 1854, "in thinking that the Rajpoots are a dissipated, opium-eating race. Tod's picture, however it may have applied to the past, was a caricature on the present. There is little, if any, truth or honesty in them, and not much more manliness. Every principality is more or less in trouble. The Princes encroach, or try to encroach, on the Thakoors, and the latter on the sovereigns. We alone keep the peace. The feudal system, as it is called, is rotten at the core. In the Kerowly succession case, I told Government that, according to present rules, no State in Rajpootana could lapse, and such is the fact if we abide by treaties and past practices; but in saying so I by no means agree with Colonel Low, Shakespear, &c., that it would not be worth while to annex these States. Far otherwise; if we could persuade ourselves to manage them by common-sense rules they would pay very well. I hope, however, they will be dealt with honestly, and that we will do our best to keep them straight. We have no right, as the *Friend of India* newspaper constantly now desires, to break our treaties. Some of them were not wise; but most were, at the time they were made, thought very advantageous to us. It would be outrageous, now that we are stronger, to break them. Our remedy for gross misgovernment was given in my article on Oude in the *Calcutta Review* nine years ago, to take the management temporarily or even permanently. We have no right to rob a man because he spends his money badly, or even because he ill treats his peasantry. We may protect and help the latter without putting the rents into our own pockets."

There were two matters to which he especially addressed

1854.

himself at this time, one the abolition of widow-burning in Rajpootana; and the other, a thorough reformation of the prison-discipline of the States, which was then an offence to humanity. On the first subject, I had written to him enclosing a letter which my dear friend, John Ludlow, who had ever been most earnest in the good cause, had addressed to me, and I had invited Lawrence's opinions on the subject, well knowing, however, that he needed no external influences to incite him to strenuous action in such a cause. "Thank you," he wrote in reply, "for Colonel Ludlow's letter about Suttee. It is very interesting. Strange enough, I did not know that four out of five of the States mentioned had not put down Suttee. This office was in such frightful confusion, that there is even still some difficulty in finding out what has been done. I have nearly completed the arrangement of the books and papers on shelves, and indexed the former, and had lists of the latter made. Until I came all were stowed away in beer-boxes, &c., all sorts of things and papers mixed together, and the mass of boxes left at Ajmeer while the agent to the Governor-General was usually here or elsewhere. Last month I circulated a paper calling for information as to what had been done in every Principality about Suttee. I was induced to do so by the Maharana of Oodeypoor ignoring the fact of anything having been effected at Jeypoor; and by a Suttee having recently occurred in Banswara, and seven in Mallanee, a purgunnah of Joudpoor (Marwar), which has been under our direct management during the last twenty years. With all respect for Colonel Ludlow, I think we can now fairly do more than he suggests. Twenty years ago the case might have been different, but we are now quite strong enough to officially denounce murder throughout Hindoostan. I have acted much on this principle. Without a word on the subject in the treaty with Gholab Singh, I got him in 1846 to forbid infanticide, Suttee, and child-selling. He issued a somewhat qualified order without much hesitation, telling me truly *he* was not strong enough to do more. We were, however, strong enough to see that his orders were acted on, and Suttee is now almost unknown in the northern hills. I do not remember above two cases since 1846, and in both the estates of offenders were resumed. I acted in

1854—55. the same manner, though somewhat against Sir R. Shakespear's wishes, in the first instance, in the Mallanee cases ; but on the grounds of the whole body of Thakoors having since agreed to consider Suttee as murder, and having also consented to pay two thousand rupees a year among them as the expense of the local management (which heretofore fell on Government). I have backed up Shakespear's recommendation that the sequestered villages should be restored. The parties have been in confinement several months. The Joudpoor punishment for Suttee was a fine of five per cent. on one year's income, which was sheer nonsense, and could never have stopped a single Suttee. Banswara has also been under our direct management for the last five or six years, owing to a minority. The people pretended they did not know Suttee had been prohibited. The offenders have been confined, and I have proclaimed that in future Suttee will be considered murder. Jeypoor is my most troublesome State. The Durbar is full of insolence. We have there interfered too much and too little. Men like Ludlow would get on well enough through their personal influence at such a place ; but the present agent, though a well-meaning, well-educated man of good ability, is, in my opinion, rather a hindrance than a help. He seems not to have a shadow of influence, and lets the country go to ruin without an effort at amendment. And yet it is very easy, without offence, to give hints and help."

Henry Lawrence had always a strong feeling of compassion, such as stirred the depths of Howard's heart, for the wretched prisoners who were huddled together in the gaols, without any classification either of criminals of different degrees or even of different sexes. "In the matter of gaols," he wrote to me, "by simply, during a rapid tour, going once into every gaol, and on my arrival here (Mount Aboo) last year writing a circular, remarking that in different gaols (without mentioning names) I had seen strange sights that must, if known to beneficent rulers, revolt their feelings, &c. &c., I therefore suggested that all Princes who kept gaols should give orders somewhat to the following effect: Classification, so as to keep men and women apart; also great offenders from minor ones; tried prisoners from untried; ventilation; places to wash, &c. &c. Well, in the course of two or three months I

got favourable answers from almost all; and heard that in several places, including Jeypoor, they proposed to build new gaols. At Oodeypoor, my brother (George Lawrence) told me that they released two hundred prisoners on receipt of my circular, and certainly they kept none that ought to have been released; for when I went to Oodeypoor, last February, I found not a man in gaol but murderers, every individual of whom acknowledged to me his offence as I walked round and questioned them. The Durbars do not like these visits; but they are worth paying at all risks, for a few questions to every tenth or twentieth prisoner gives opportunities to innocent persons to come forward and petition. No officer appears ever before to have been in one of these dens."

But although in these ancient Rajpoot States there was much room for the exercise of his chivalrous benevolence, he did not greatly rejoice in the office that he held, and he never ceased to think that he had been "shelved." Writing to an old friend from Mount Aboo, he thus unburdened himself: "This is really a heavenly place; Cashmere and Nepaul in miniature. I ought to be happy here, but I bother myself with many things present and past. The present are, that my Rajpoot chiefs are very foolish, and are running their heads into the annexation net; especially the Oodeypoor people. I do not know which is most perverse and foolish, the Maharana or the chiefs. I have staved off coercion hitherto; but I fear it will eventually be necessary, and, when once begun, who knows where it will end? I tell them all this daily, and point to the Punjab and Oude, and show them that I am ready to undergo any labour for their benefit if they will act with me. But all are full of spite. The Maharana expects us to put down the chiefs, and at the same time will not do them the commonest justice. On the other hand, many of the chiefs are most contumacious. The Jeypoor Rajah is, I think, the best of the kings, and he might have been made a very good fellow had he been tolerably educated. . . . My past troubles refer to Lord Dalhousie's treatment of me after my six years' successful administration of the Punjab, where he and his clique strive to ignore me and my doings. Bothering myself on these matters is all very foolish on my part. If from one man I have received less than my

1856. deserts, I have from many better men received more than was my due, and in my private relations I have been blessed as few men have been. I hope to see you by April or May. I have made up my mind that, all being quiet, I will go home next March for six or ten months, according to the leave I can get. My health is better than it used to be, but I am getting worn out, and cannot stand the heat and exertion as I used when I had more definite illness. My eyes, too, are failing a good deal. I shall be glad of a little rest, and the opportunity of seeing you and other friends, and of introducing Alick to India. How long I may remain in India, if I live to return, will depend on circumstances ; but at present I have no vision before me of the few acres that you tell me would content you ; though, curious enough, I was told very lately by a friend that she had left me her best farm, in the south of England, in her will. But I must confess the ungrateful fact, I am a discontented man. I don't want money. I have more than ample. You know how simple are my tastes, how few my wants. Well, I have two lakhs of rupees, of which each of my three children has 5000*l.*, and I have another 5000*l.* to spare, so that I hardly care to save any more. Money, therefore, is not my aim, but I do desire to wipe away the stain cast on me by Lord Dalhousie. On this account I really believe I would have gone to Oude had it been offered me, though the chances are that the labours and vexations there would have killed me, as those at Lahore nearly did. I gather from your silence as to Persia that there are no serious intentions against that country. The more we advance, the more we must expect Russia to do so. It is the fashion to call it our destiny to swallow up everything. I wish it were considered our destiny, or rather our duty, to consolidate what we have got. The Serampore weekly paper, the *Friend of India*, which was Lord Dalhousie's organ, and is conducted with great ability, is a perfect 'Filibuster.' Almost every number contains a clever article on the duty of absorbing native States, resuming jagheers, &c. &c."

But great as were these public provocations, his residence in Rajpootana was associated with even a more bitter trial. In that country his beloved wife, whose health had

1856.

never been good in India, sickened and died. It was a heavy, a crushing blow ; and, though he bowed himself resignedly to it, "the difference" was keenly felt by him in every hour of his life. The loss of his helpmate preyed upon his spirits, and sorely affected his health. In his affliction, he sometimes turned for relief to the thought of his children, and meditated a visit to England to embrace them there ; at other times he turned to contemplate the great restorative of strenuous action, and longed for some new field on which to exercise his manly energies, and in the proud satisfaction of duty done to find some solace for his private griefs. He hoped that the annexation of Oude would afford him just the exciting work that he coveted. So, when Sir James Outram was driven home by failing health, he offered to take his place at Lucknow. But the offer came too late. A civilian had been appointed to the post ; and so Sir Henry Lawrence fell back upon the alternative of a visit to England ; and he was about to carry the design into execution, when a succession of circumstances arrested the homeward movement.

In the month of August, a report reached him that his brother John, the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, had expressed his desire to take a furlough to England for the benefit of his health. The rumour turned the thoughts and desires of Henry Lawrence into a new current. He had never ceased to wish to return to the Punjab, if only for a few months ; and now the opportunity appeared to lie before him. So he wrote a letter to the Governor-General, Lord Canning, making an offer of his services, and pointing out, at the same time, that his brother, George Lawrence, was the fittest person to succeed him in Rajpootana. "Some months ago," he wrote, "I mentioned to your Lordship that Lord Dalhousie had given me leave to go home for six months, early this year, on the terms of my brother, Colonel G. Lawrence, Political Agent at Neemuch, officiating for me. I was prevented going by the unsettled state of affairs. I am, however, still anxious to go. I have only been eight months in England for twenty-six years, and my son will be coming out in the Civil Service towards the end of next year. I should like to have a few months at home with him and to bring him out. I therefore beg of your Lordship the same favour that Lord

1856.

Dalhousie granted. I am too anxious for the tranquillity of my charge to ask you to put my brother into my place if I did not think him qualified. He is a year senior to myself, was for some years Military Secretary at Caubul, and for about five years successfully managed and administered Peshawur. He kept the largest division of the Sikh Army—ten thousand or twelve thousand men—to their duty for six months after all the rest of the Punjab was in a flame during the last Sikh war. Even as a prisoner in their hands, the Sikh soldiers and chiefs and people respected him. No man had a word to say against him. As a prisoner in Afghanistan, he was equally respected, and was the managing man, though there were several of his seniors among the prisoners. The Afghans trusted him to visit the British camp. The Sikhs twice did so. His views on Rajpootana affairs agree better with mine than those of any other man who would be likely to succeed me. We are quite agreed that it is best, as far as possible, to let the Rajpoots manage their own affairs, but that where there is interference it should be effectual. He is senior to every officer in Rajpootana, and indeed to almost all in the Political Department. . . . Much as I desire to go home, I should not stir if there was disturbance. If all be quiet, I should like to get leave for two months to take a rush through the Madras Presidency, and then embark at Bombay about the middle of April on six months' leave. The two months in India would enable me to judge whether I could, without anxiety, go home. While I am on the subject of my own affairs, I may add, as I have heard a rumour of the probability of my brother John going home on medical certificate, that I would forego all private views about home could I thereby return to the Punjab even for a twelvemonth. Your Lordship is aware that I served on that frontier for many (eleven) years, and that I only left because I found it difficult to agree, on small matters, with my brother, and because I observed that Lord Dalhousie preferred my brother's views to mine. His Lordship refused my first offer to go away, as I coupled the offer with saying I made it under pressure. He distinctly repeated that I was perfectly free to go or stay. I adhered to my proposal simply, as I have said, on account of the preference for my brother. I felt, how-

1856.

ever, bitterly the termination of so many years' successful labour. I have not communicated with my brother about my present wish. He possibly may not desire to have me as his *locum tenens*, under the impression that I would upset his arrangements. But my views and opinions are far different. On all large questions, except annexation and the treatment of the native gentry, we were well agreed. My opinions are, that an officer officiating for another should make as few changes as possible. I am sorry to trouble your Lordship on personal questions, but I hope it will not be considered an unreasonable ambition that I should desire to return to a people among whom I spent the best years of my life, and to a province where I left no enemy and many friends."

But the report of John Lawrence's intended visit to England was an erroneous one; and soon Henry wrote again to the Governor-General, saying that he had discovered it was a mistake, and at the end of the year wrote again on the subject of his contemplated visit to England. "With your Lordship's permission," he said, "I propose to avail myself of your sanction to proceed to England, and to leave Neemuch for that purpose on the 1st of February, so as to go by the steamer on the 6th of March. My health has been for some months so indifferent, that three doctors have given me medical certificates, but I do not propose to remain in England beyond the end of autumn. Had my health been better I should have placed myself at your Lordship's disposal for serving towards Herat, if an army go in that direction, though I sincerely hope that no such step will be taken. If, however, we must give up our advantages of position, and seek the Russians instead of letting them destroy themselves in the passes, we need at any rate to send a very different sort of army from either that which went in 1838-39 or the one of 1842. On this point, or rather on the army question generally, as your Lordship did me the honour to ask my opinion when in Calcutta, I beg to say that I am the author of the two articles in the *Calcutta Review* of March and September last, the first on the 'Indian Army,' the other on 'Army Reform.' The question is one I have long had at heart, and look on it as the vital one of our Indian Empire." This was written on the day after Christmas; but the new

1857.

year was only a few weeks old when the contemplated visit to England was abandoned, and Henry Lawrence turned his thoughts towards a new field of beneficent labour.

The administration of Mr. Jackson in Oude was not successful. A man of undoubted ability and unquestioned integrity, he wanted temper and discretion; moreover, he wanted sympathy; so he quarrelled with his subordinates, and failed to conciliate the privileged classes, whom it was the inevitable tendency of the introduction of British rule to impoverish and humiliate, and who ought to have been dealt with gently and generously in their misfortunes. So after a while Lord Canning, seeing that affairs were rapidly drifting from bad to worse, removed Mr. Jackson from the Oude Commissionership, and offered the post to Sir Henry Lawrence.

The Oude
Commission.

He eagerly accepted the offer. "I am honoured and gratified," he wrote to Lord Canning, "by your kind letter of the 9th, this day received. I am quite at your Lordship's service, and will cancel my leave and move to Lucknow at a day's notice, if you think fit, after this explanation, to appoint me. My own doctor (my friend Ebden) thinks better of my health than any other doctor; three other doctors, whom I consulted before I came here, replied that I certainly ought to go home. The two Staff doctors at this station say the same. But Dr. Ebden and Dr. Lowndes, who both know me well, say that my constitution has that elasticity that, in a work so much to my taste as that in Oude, I may be able to hold out. Annoyances try me much more than work. I went round Guzrat last month, several times, riding thirty or more miles during the day, and being repeatedly out all day or night, sometimes both. I can also work at my desk for twelve or fifteen hours at a time. Work, therefore, does not yet oppress me. But ever since I was so cavalierly elbowed out of the Punjab I have fretted, even to the injury of my health. Your Lordship's handsome letter has quite relieved my mind on that point, so I repeat that if, on this explanation, you think fit to send me to Oude, I am quite ready, and can be there within twenty days of receiving your telegraphic reply. If Jung Bahadoor will let me go for a couple of months, in the hot weather, to a point of

1857.

Nepaul, near to Oude, your Lordship will probably not object, so as all be quiet within my charge. I was well acquainted with Mr. Jung when I was Resident at Katmandoo, and I think he would be glad to renew intercourse. If he will not, you will perhaps let me take a part of my office to Nynee-Tal or Almorah, for a couple of the most trying months, if I find that I can do so without injury to the public service. These stations are but two nights' run from Oude. That I have not abused my license to live at Aboo is proved by the fact of my having been marching about Rajpootana at one time or other during every month of the year except June."

No better appointment than this could have been made, but the wisdom of the act was marred by one fatal defect: it was "too late." When the new Commissioner reached Lucknow, he found that almost everything that ought not to have been done had been done, and that what ought to have been first done had not been done at all, and that the seeds of rebellion had been sown broadcast over the land. He saw plainly what was coming. On his journey to Oude he spent some little time with an old and honoured friend—the friend to whom I am indebted for the account of Lawrence's Goruckpore days—and he told the civilian that the time was not far distant when he (Mr. Reade), with the Lieutenant-Governor and other big Brahmins, would be shut up in the fort of Agra by a rebellion of the Native Army.

But the appointment pleased him. No higher proof of the confidence of the Governor-General could have been afforded to him; no more important duties could have devolved upon him. How he wished that he had gone there a year sooner! But he did all that could be done to repair the errors of the past. He found the aristocracy—the Princes and the nobles of the land—bowed down to the dust, keeping body and soul together, men and women alike of high birth, with the best blood in their veins, by selling their shawls and jewels after dark in the bazaars. At once he took up a duty so mercilessly neglected by his predecessor, and began, without wasting time on preliminary inquiries—for investigation and starvation in such cases are synonymous—to pay the stipends of the old nobility. But it was not in mortal power to arrest

1857. the growth of the rebellion, which was then striking deep root in the soil. In other parts of the country the disaffection which was exhibiting itself in the spring of 1857 might be nothing more than military mutiny—a mere professional agitation, accidental, superficial; but in Oude there was small likelihood of its stopping short of a national insurrection. Firstly, it was plain that the introduction of British rule had turned against us all the great territorial chiefs—feudal barons with large bodies of armed followers—and all the once-powerful classes which had been maintained in wealth and luxury by the Court of Lucknow. It was plain, also, that the disbanding of the old native army of Oude had scattered over the country large numbers of lawless and desperate men, owing their ruin to the English usurpation. But plainest of all was the fact, that a large proportion of the Sepoy army of Bengal was drawn from the small yeomanry of Oude; that the province was indeed the great home of our native soldiery, and that in every village there were numerous families sure to sympathise with the malcontents, and to aid the efforts of their sons and brothers in the Company's Army.

State of the
Sepoy Army.

There was no subject of which Sir Henry Lawrence had thought more—none in which he took a deeper or more anxious interest—than the condition of the Sepoy army. For many years he had lifted up his voice, vainly, against the defects of the system, and vaticinating evil, often, as he said, to his own injury. And now that the palpable discontents in the native regiments were filling all men with alarm, he wrote frequent letters to the Governor-General, giving him the results of his experience. “I have recently,” he wrote on May 1st, 1857, “received many letters on the state of the army. Most of them attribute the present bad feeling not to the cartridge, or any other specific question, but to a pretty general dissatisfaction at many recent acts of Government, which have been skilfully played upon by incendiaries. This is my own opinion. The Sepoy is not the man of consequence he was. He dislikes annexations, among other reasons, because each new province added to the empire widens his sphere of service, and at the same time decreases

1857.

our foreign enemies, and thereby the Sepoys' importance. Ten years ago a Sepoy in the Punjab asked an officer what we could do without them; another said, 'Now you have got the Punjab, you will reduce the army.' A third remarked, when he heard that Sindh was to be joined to Bengal, 'Perhaps there will be an order to join London to Bengal.' The other day an Oude Sepoy of the Bombay Cavalry at Neemuch, being asked if he liked annexation, replied: 'No. I used to be a great man when I went home, the best in my village rose as I approached; now, the lowest puff their pipes in my face.' The general service enlistment oath is most distasteful. It keeps many out of the Service, and frightens the old Sepoys, who imagine that the oaths of the young recruits affect the whole regiment. One of the best captains of the 13th Native Infantry (at this place) said to me, last week, he has clearly ascertained this fact. Mr. E. A. Reade, of the Sudder Board, who was for years Collector of Gorruckpoor, had 'the General Service Order' given to him as a reason, last year, when on his tour, by many Rajpoots, for not entering the Service. 'The Salt Water,' he told me, was the universal answer. The new Post-office rules are bitter grievances; indeed, the native community generally suffer by them. But the Sepoy, having had special privileges, feels this deprivation in addition to the general uncertainty as to letters; nay, rather the positive certainty of not getting them. There are many other points which might with great advantage be redressed, which, if your Lordship will permit me, I will submit with extracts from some of the letters I have received from old regimental officers. In the words of one of them: 'If the Sepoy is not speedily redressed, he will redress himself.' I would rather say, unless some openings and rewards are offered to the military, as have been to the native civil servants, and unless certain matters are righted, we shall be perpetually subjected to our present condition of affairs. The Sepoy feels we cannot do without him, and yet the highest reward a Sepoy can obtain at fifty, sixty, and seventy years of age, is about one hundred pounds a year, without a prospect of a brighter career for his son. Surely this is not the inducement to offer to a foreign soldier for special fidelity and long service. I earnestly entreated Lords

1857. Hardinge's and Dalhousie's attention to the fact, and more especially to the point that Jemadar's pay, though he is a commissioned officer, second in rank to the highest, is only twenty-four rupees a month, or less than thirty pounds a year, while the average age of Jemadars in the Bengal army is not less than fifty. The pension rules are, perhaps, the greatest of all the grievances. No soldier in the Bengal army can retire after any length of service, until he is incapacitated by ill-health. Recently the rules have been made more stringent, and scores of men sent up to Committees have been rejected. Last week I saw in the 13th Native Infantry hospital a Havildar, a fine fellow in his youth, who had been for years a leper, and another who had been for nine months quite lame. These two are and have been in hospital since they returned a month ago from the Cawnpore Committee. The regimental authorities think them useless as soldiers, yet the rules of the Service oblige the Committee to send them back to engender discontent, and to burthen the finances, and to encumber the regiment. Some months ago I wrote officially from Aboo about the hardship of the invalid rules on Irregulars. Yesterday one of the Jodhpoor Legion Soubahdars was with me, a noble old fellow of fifty-two years' service; two days before a more infirm Soubahdar of the Legion, of only forty years' service, was also with me, on his way home on leave. Both these men ought to have been in the invalids ten years ago, and probably would have been, had they been in the Bombay army. An order allowing retirement on a small pension, after a certain service, would be hailed with gratitude throughout the Service. . . . While on the subject, I must give your Lordship a proof of the estimate in which 'The Salt Water' (Kala Panee) is held, even by the most rough-and-ready portion of the native army. Last week an invalid Soubahdar of the Bombay 18th Native Infantry was with me for an hour or more. Among other matters, I asked him about foreign service, especially about Aden, whence he was invalided. With a sort of horror he referred to being restricted to three gallons of water daily. I asked whether he would prefer one hundred rupees a month at Aden to fifty at Baroda (where he had just before told me there was much fever). He replied at once, 'Fifty at Baroda.' I then said,

1857.

‘Or one hundred and twenty-five at Aden?’ His answer was to the effect, ‘I went where I was ordered, but life is precious; anything in India is better than wealth beyond the sea.’ And such, I am convinced, is the general Hindoo feeling. The man was a Brahmin, but a thorough loyalist. He had just before told me that he had stood in the ranks, shoulder to shoulder with outcasts, and that at Bombay a man would jump into a well if ordered. The reason he assigned for such implicit obedience was the greater admixture of castes. ‘We are not all one there.’ He might have given another reason: that the majority are far from their homes, also that the army is comparatively small, and has a larger proportion of Europeans. Invalid battalions, or regiments of a Service and a Home battalion, would be a boon, and would make the army more effective. The elderly and weakly would have comparative ease; the energetic and the young would have active employment. Twenty out of the seventy-four regiments being enlisted for general service, would meet all possible necessities for service beyond sea. Mahomedans and low-caste Hindoos would fill their ranks, and would give more contented Rajpoots and Brahmins for the other fifty-four, or say even forty-four regiments. All the roads are swarming with leave of absence and invalid Sepoys.”

On the following day he wrote with especial reference to the Artillery, in which branch of the Service he naturally took the deepest interest: “I have no reason to doubt the fidelity of the Artillery, though much has been done to disgust many of the native officers, because they don’t understand our mounted drill. All the European officers are very young men, and therefore look to mere smartness. Lieutenant A——, a mere boy, wants to invalid two Jemadars, both of them fine soldierly-looking fellows, and who know their duty as gunners, and are good riders, but don’t understand English words of command. One of them is only a trifle above forty years of age, and neither of them wish to be invalided. I returned the roll, and a few days afterwards being struck by the appearance of the men at mounted exercise, I told Mr. A—— we should think ourselves lucky to have such men as native officers in our regular battalions. His reply was: ‘I protest, Sir Henry, against my battery being compared with a regular

1857. one,' or words to that effect. Another day I saw the reserve company of Artillery, a splendid set of fellows, in appearance, at extension motions; that is, poking about their arms and feet as recruits have to do, though the majority are old soldiers, and many were in our own ranks. Thus it is that pipeclay and over-drill tend to disgust them. Two hours ago Captain Carnegie came to tell me that there has been a strong demonstration against cartridges in the 7th Oude Irregulars this morning. I hope and expect the report he heard is exaggerated, but I tell it for his commentary. He also told of an intended meeting of traitors to-morrow night, and asked whether he might put prisoners taken at such a meeting into gaol, as the Kotwalle is not safe. He gave me, however, to understand that he considers the military Police more safe than the Irregulars. The former are under their own old officers (a single one to a regiment), while the Irregulars are under new and young men. Now Captain Carnegie is an old interpreter, and quartermaster of a native corps, and had no hint from me of my opinion. Yet I am not sure he is not right. The Police have had more duty, but less pipeclay and bother. The pay is the same. . . . As far as I have ascertained, the bad feeling, as yet, is chiefly among the Hindoo Sepoys. Doubtless it is their fear for caste that has been worked on. Major Banks tells me that three years ago, when the education stir prevailed in Behar, a Soubahdar of the Body Guard seriously consulted him as to the report that all the servants of the State were to be made Christians. Thus, the oldest and best Hindoos are easily moved; but if bad feeling extended to open mutiny, the Mahommedans would soon become the most energetic and virulent mutineers. I will, as your Lordship directs, watch for difference of feeling between the two creeds." He then turned to discuss the question much mooted at the time, of the effect that the unlicensed Press had had in fomenting these prevailing discontents. He was all in favour of a free Press. He used it very freely himself, for the expression of his own opinions, and was not one to question the benefits which it had conferred on India. But he could not help seeing that although the native mind was necessarily wrought upon by the native Press, the power of mischief possessed by that Press was in no small measure derived from

1857.

the weapons placed in its hands by the European journals. On this subject he emphatically declared: "Whatever may be the danger from the native Press, I look on it that the papers published in our language are much the most dangerous. Disaffected native editors need only translate as they do, with or without notes, or words of admiration or exclamations, editorials from the *Friend of India* (on the duty of annexing every native State, on the imbecility, if not wickedness, of allowing a single Jagheer, and of preaching the Gospel, even by commanding officers), to raise alarm and hatred in the minds of all religionists, and all connected with native principalities or Jagheers. And among the above will be found a large majority of the dangerous classes." He then began to converse on the levelling system, so much in vogue amongst us. "We measure," he said, "too much by English rules, and expect, contrary to all experience, that the energetic and aspiring among immense military masses should like our dead level and our arrogation to ourselves, even where we are notorious imbeciles, of all authority and all emolument. These sentiments of mine, freely expressed during the last fifteen years, have done me injury, but I am not the less convinced of their soundness; and that until we treat natives, and especially native soldiers, as having much the same feelings, the same ambition, the same perception of ability and imbecility as ourselves, we shall never be safe. I do not advocate altogether disregarding seniority, but I do wonder that Generals, Colonels, and Soubahdars should only as a rule be men past work, who have never in their youth and energy been entrusted with power or responsibility. Also that we should expect the Soubahdar and Jemadar to be content with sixty-seven and twenty-four rupees a month respectively, while in the Civil Department their fellows, ten or twenty years younger, enjoy five hundred, six hundred, and even a thousand rupees, and while they themselves, if under a native ruler, would be Generals, if not Rajahs or Newabs. I have not seen original articles on the cartridge question, but almost every letter and article in the English papers regarding Barrackpore, Ambala, Meerut, Burhampore, and Dinapore, have been translated. The original articles chiefly refer to local grievances and personalities. The politics

1857. of the editor are to be chiefly gathered from pithy exclamations, &c., heading an article, as 'How Good!' 'Wonderful!' 'Mutiny and more Fires!' with plentiful supply of the words 'mutiny,' 'disobedience,' 'disturbance.' I would not trouble any of them, but, with your Lordship's permission, I think we might squash half the number, by helping one or two of the cleverest with information, and even with editorials and illustrations. Dr. Ogilvie tells me more than one of the English illustrated papers would, for a good purpose, sell cheap their half-worn plates. An illustrated vernacular cleverly edited would tell well, and do good politically and morally. I will be glad of your Lordship's sanction to a trial, not involving above five thousand rupees, or five hundred pounds. Of course I would not appear, and I would use the present editors—at any rate, try to do so."

May, 1857.
The Mutiny in
Oude.

The storm was now gathering, and Lawrence watched its progress with painful interest. He had long anticipated its coming, and insisted upon the wisdom of being prepared. One who had known him well, and worked with him for many years, writing to me of his foresight, says: "With all his love for the people and their interests, he felt that the rule of strangers was only tolerated because they could not help themselves. He was ever alive to the necessity for care and vigilance. His conversation constantly turned to the subject, and what measures should be adopted in case of any general disturbance. He did not, like most, rest in the feeling of perfect security. Passing along the parade-ground one afternoon, where there were several hundred young Hindostanee recruits at drill, he suddenly stopped, and pointing to them, said to me: 'Do you see those fine young fellows? Mark my words, the Government is nourishing young vipers in their breast, and unless care is taken they will one day turn upon us.' This was five years before the mutiny. With all this he never showed any distrust of them, but ever studied their interests and feelings." There was no one, indeed, who looked more tenderly and compassionately upon them, or with a deeper sense that the mischief which he so clearly discerned might have been averted by the observance of a

1857

more generous policy than that which had recently found favour in our eyes. Regarding the Sepoy as a representative man, the exponent of the feelings and opinions of extensive village populations, and most of all in the great province of Oude, which he was then administering, he felt strongly that in the event of an outburst of the discontented soldiery, the rising must partake, more or less, of the character of a national revolt. Moreover, it was certain that, apart from all this, so many at the capital, who had fattened on the extravagance and profligacy of the Court, had suffered grievously by the coming of the English, that a rebellion of the troops would be the signal for a dangerous rising in the city.

When, therefore, the storm burst—and it was certain that a crisis had arrived which would call forth all the energies of the English in India for the maintenance of our dominion—there was no single point of danger to which men's minds turned with deeper anxiety than to Lucknow; but over this anxiety there came an inspiring feeling of confidence when they remembered that Henry Lawrence was there. To the Governor-General this was an especial source of consolation. One of the earliest incidents of the military mutiny was an outbreak in an Irregular native regiment posted near Lucknow. With this Lawrence had grappled promptly and vigorously, in a manner which had won general admiration. Lord Canning saw clearly then that the right man was at the point of danger; and when Lawrence telegraphed to him, saying, "Give me full military authority: I will not use it unnecessarily," the Governor-General did not hesitate to place the chief direction of military as well as of civil affairs in the hands of the Commissioner. With this full responsibility upon him, he moved freely and without embarrassment. He could look with the soldier's and with the statesman's eye at the appearances before him; and he was as competent to deal with details of military defence, as to accommodate in other matters the action of his government to the political temper of the times. Preparing to meet the worst emergencies that could arise, he provided for the security of the European garrison; but he endeavoured at the same time to conciliate all classes, and especially to wean the minds of the soldiery

1857. from the apprehensions which had taken possession of them with respect to the safety of their caste. It was soon, however, apparent that nothing could be done by exhortations or persuasions—by promises of rewards to the faithful, or threats of punishment to the unfaithful. Neither words, nor money, nor dresses of honour could avail. Nothing but the stout heart and the strong arm could, under Providence, help the English in the extremity of their need.

As the month of May—that ill-omened month, which had seen the sanguinary outbreak at Meerut and the great calamity of the seizure of Delhi—wore to a close, appearances at Lucknow, and indeed all through the province, became more threatening. He had by this time done all that could be done for the safety of the people under his care; and before the month of June dawned upon him, he saw clearly the value of these precautions.* On the 29th of May, writing to Lord Canning, he thus described his position: “I have refrained from writing, as I had nothing pleasant to say, and indeed little more than a detail of daily alarms and hourly reports. Our three positions are now strong. In the cantonment where I reside, the two hundred and seventy or so men of her Majesty’s 32nd, with eight guns, could at any time knock to pieces the few native regiments, and both the city Residency and the Muchee-Bhawn positions are safe against all probable comers; the latter quite so. But the work is harassing for all; and now we have no tidings from Delhi, my outside perplexities are hourly increasing. This day (29th) I had tidings of the murder of a Tehsildar in one

* What these precautions were are well and succinctly stated by a very old and dear friend and fellow-labourer, who, writing to me, says: “Look again at Lucknow. It was Henry Lawrence’s foresight, humanly speaking, that saved every one of the garrison. But for him, I do not believe that one would have escaped. Three weeks before any one thought of the possibility of our ever being besieged in Lucknow, he saw that it might be the case. He laid his plans accordingly; got in all the treasure from the city and stations; bought up and stored grain and supplies of every kind; bought up all the supplies of the European shopkeepers;

got the mortars and guns to the Residency; got in the powder and small ammunition, all the shot and shell, and the heavy guns; had pits dug for the powder and grain; arranged for water supply; strengthened the Residency; had outworks formed; cleared away all obstructions close up to the Residency, and made every preparation for the worst; and when, after the fight at Chinhut, the mutineers closed in on the Residency, and the whole population of the city and the province rose against us, they found the little garrison amply supplied with provisions, ammunition, and resources of every kind.”

1857.

direction, and of the cry of 'Islam,' and the raising of the green standard, in another. I have also had reports of disaffection in three several Irregular corps. Hitherto the country has been quiet, and we have played the Irregulars against the Line regiments. But being constituted of the same materials, the taint is fast pervading them, and in a few weeks, if not days, unless Delhi be in the interim captured, there will be one feeling throughout the army—a feeling that our prestige is gone—and that feeling will be more dangerous than any other. Religion, fear, hatred, one and all have their influences, but there is still a reverence for the Company's Ikbal. When it is gone, we shall have few friends indeed. The tone and talk of many have greatly altered within the last few days, and we are now asked, almost in terms of insolence, whether Delhi is recaptured, or when it will be. It was only just after the Caubul massacre, and when we hesitated to advance through the Khybur, that, in my memory, such tone ever before prevailed. Every effort should be made to recover Delhi. The "King" is a watchword to Mahomedans; the loss of a capital is a stigma on us, and to these are added the fears prevailing among all classes regarding religion. A native letter, recently sent to your Lordship by Colonel Colin Troup, from Bareilly, fairly depicts the feeling of the better classes of natives, and especially of Brahmins. They think that we are ungrateful, and that we no longer respect their religion or care for their interests. There is no positive abuse in that letter, whereas in all that are posted or dropped here the chief ingredients are abuse and violence. . . . Once Delhi is recaptured the game will again be in our own hands, if we play the cards with ordinary skill."

He had not proceeded much further than this when stress of active business compelled him to break off, and before he could complete the letter the native troops in the cantonment had broken into open mutiny. On the evening of the 30th of May, when Sir Henry Lawrence and his Staff were at dinner, a Sepoy, who had previously been rewarded for his fidelity, rushed in and announced that there was a rising in the Lines. Lawrence at once ordered out a party of Europeans, with some guns, and sending for further reinforce-

1857.

ments, went down to the scene of the disturbance. Good execution was done that night, and again on the following morning, against the mutineers; and when Lawrence again took up his pen to resume the interrupted letter to the Governor-General, he spoke cheerfully of the situation, saying that he thought matters were better than before. "Press of work," he wrote, "stopped me here. We have since had the émeute which I have telegraphed. We are now positively better than we were. We now know our friends and enemies; the latter beggars have no stomach for a fight, though they are capital incendiaries. We followed them on Sunday morning six miles, and only once got within round-shot range. I went with a few horsemen four or five miles farther; we got sixty prisoners in all, and I am now trying them and others by three drum-head courts-martial. Yesterday evening we had several large gatherings in the city, and towards night they opened fire on the police and on a post of Irregulars. The former behaved admirably, and thrashed them well; killed several, and took six prisoners. Among the former was a brother-in-law of the King's Vakeel. The Kotwal headed the police. I have made him a Bahadoor. . . . This evening we hung two men—one a Sepoy, who murdered poor Lieutenant Grant, and a spy. Tomorrow I shall get the proceedings of other courts, and will probably hang twenty or thirty. These executions will, I am confident, quiet men's minds. I have told you by telegraph it will never do to retire on Allahabad; we could not do it. Besides, I am quite confident we can hold our ground at Lucknow as long as provisions last, and we have already a month's laid in. When Delhi is taken we are all safe. If there is much delay, most of our outposts will be lost. The officers killed are Brigadier Handscomb, Lieutenant Grant, and Cornet Raleigh, 9th Light Cavalry. Wounded: Lieutenant Chambers, 13th N. I., and Lieutenant Hardinge, 3rd Oude Cavalry. Hardinge is a splendid soldier. He led a few horse several times through the burning cantonments and through a crowd of mutineers. One shot at him within a foot, and then bayoneted him through the flesh of the arm. Hardinge shot the fellow dead. Wounded as he was, he could not have had an hour's sleep, and yet he was the hero

of yesterday's work, and had we had any good cavalry he would have cut up all the mutineers. I was wrong as to his having been the hero. He was one. Martin Gubbins was another. He, with three horsemen, did the work of a regiment, and headed the rascals, and brought in six prisoners, for which I have given the three horsemen six hundred rupees."

1857.

It would be vain to endeavour, in such a Memoir as this, to narrate the incidents of the defence of Lucknow, even in so far as Sir Henry Lawrence was connected with them. That story belongs to history. How wisely and assiduously he laboured, with what untiring energy and devotion, in spite of the failure of the frail flesh, has been told by more than one of his comrades. He was in feeble health when first he went to Lucknow. It had been his intention to proceed to England for a while, partly to recruit his strength, and partly to direct the final studies of his son, then about to enter the Indian Civil Service, when the offer of the Oude Commissionership arrested his homeward movements, and braced him up awhile for the continuance of his work. But the hot weather coming in with such a crowd of anxieties, tried him severely; and it was plain to those who were about his person that mind and body had been tasked overmuch. "The ordinary labours of his office," wrote one who was continually in official association with him, "had fully tried his strength; but the intense anxiety attending his position at the present crisis would have worn the strongest frame. At first he was able to ride about a good deal, but now he drove about in his carriage. He lost appetite and sleep, and his changed and careworn appearance was painfully visible to all." But he worked on; and when, in the second week of June, such an alarming state of exhaustion supervened that his medical staff cautioned him that further application to business would endanger his life, he could with difficulty be persuaded to lay aside his work for a little time, and on the first symptom of a slight accession of strength, returned eagerly to his duties. Active among the active, as a soldier he was ever in the front and in the midst of danger.

June.
Progress of
Rebellion.

From the letters which he wrote during the month of June, the following extracts may be given. They exhibit the progress of events at Lucknow, and the sentiments with which

1857.

Lawrence regarded them: "June 13 (*To Lord Canning*). I wrote a long letter yesterday, telling you of the sad succession of misfortunes in this quarter.* To-day I have had confirmation of the fate of Sooltanpore and Fyzabad. A native letter, bearing the stamp of truth, tells that the troops rose and butchered the Europeans at Sooltanpore. From Fyzabad Mr. Bradford writes (no date, probably the 6th), that the officers and ladies had *all* been saved, that everything had been conducted with the utmost regularity, the native civil officers taking prominent places, and that the King of Delhi had been proclaimed. In all quarters we hear of similar method and regularity. At Duriabad, Secrora, and Seeta-poor, individuals have been obliged to give up their plunder, and the treasure is carefully guarded. This quiet method bespeaks some leading influence. We cannot get certain tidings from Cawnpore, although we have sent many messengers; but we have no reason to doubt that General Wheeler still holds his ground. The mutineers hold the river bank for many miles above and below Cawnpore, and search all passers. They at once seized all the boats and drew them to their own bank. Would that we could help the besieged, but our numbers, the distance, and the river, forbid the thought. This is frightful weather for field operations for Europeans. Yesterday we lost two out of a hundred and thirty, from exposure, after three P.M., in our pursuit of the mutinous Police battalions. We hold our ground in cantonment, and daily strengthen both our town positions, bearing in mind that the Residency is to be the final point of concentration. The health of the troops is good, and the weather propitious, as long as there is not exposure to the sun. The conduct of the Europeans is beautiful. By God's help we can hold our own for a month, but there should be no delay in sending succour. The appearance of two European regiments would soon enable us to settle the province; but if Lucknow be lost, and this force destroyed, the difficulty would be vastly increased. I am quite well again. Pray have us informed of what is going on elsewhere; it seems a century since our communications have been cut off." "June 16. To-day we received a letter of the 14th from General Wheeler, who

* This letter seems to have miscarried.

1857.

bravely holds out. He asks us for two hundred Europeans. I would risk the absence of so large a portion of our small force could I see the smallest prospect of its being able to succour him. But no individual here, cognisant of facts, except Mr. Gubbins, thinks we could carry a single man across the river, as the enemy holds all the boats, and completely commands the river. May God Almighty defend Cawnpore, for no help can we afford! Our own positions are daily strengthening, and our supplies increasing; but all the outposts are gone, and the rebels and mutineers are said to be closing in on us, though as yet all is quiet at Lucknow. Elsewhere throughout the province all is anarchy, the Talookdars re-occupying the villages of which the summary settlement dispossessed them, and all men asserting their own rights."

"June 19. It is now a fortnight since we have had a communication from either Agra or Calcutta. My several letters, some of which I trust have reached, have reported our position. All our outposts are gone, but we still hold the Lucknow cantonment and city, and a small circuit around. Daily, however, we expect to be besieged, and many of the military in cantonment are afraid of their position, and desire to be withdrawn; on the other hand, Mr. Gubbins wishes that a small force (two hundred Europeans, four guns, one hundred Sepoys, and about fifty horse) should be sent wherever there is talk of a gathering. It is a very great grief to me to be unable to help Cawnpore. Were we stronger, the want of boats would make the move impracticable; but circumstanced as we are, the absence of two hundred Europeans and four guns for a week would peril our whole position. Not having a single trustworthy native, we are helpless for offensive operations, but, with care and prudence, we are strong for defence, as long as food remains and sickness keeps off. We have had eight deaths by cholera among the Europeans during the last fortnight, and some among the natives. Otherwise the health is good. Steamers can come to Fyzabad. We look anxiously for news." "June 21. A letter from General Wheeler, dated 18th of June, ten P.M., stated that his supplies would hold out for another fortnight, that he had plenty of ammunition, and that his guns were serviceable. The enemy's attacks had always been repulsed with loss, but he was much in want of

1857.

assistance. Troops are still reported to be assembling at Fyzabad and at Duriabad, with the intention of concentrating and attacking Lucknow, but it does not seem that any onward movement has at present been made. Our position is daily getting stronger, but daily some of our few natives are leaving, and, if we are besieged, I fear that few, if any, will remain. This will be inconvenient, as it will make more difficult the raising of a native force when we are able to take the field. We still hold the cantonment, and move eight or ten miles out if necessary, but with no trustworthy cavalry and very few artillerymen, we are obliged to look keenly to our two positions in the city. If either would hold all conveniently, the other should have been abandoned; but such is not the case. Each has its advantages, and we have to guard against sickness as much as the enemy. From four sides we are threatened; but if all go well quickly at Delhi, and, still more, if Cawnpore hold out, I doubt if we shall be besieged at all. Our preparations alarm the enemy. It is deep grief to me to be unable to help Cawnpore. I would run much risk for Wheeler's sake; but an attempt with our means would only ruin ourselves without helping Cawnpore. Cholera in a light form is amongst us; we have lost eight Europeans during the last fortnight at the Muchee-Bhawn. At each post four or five natives have died during the last week. All sanitary measures are being taken. The general health is good, and the weather, though hot, is favourable to those not exposed. I am well. European troops moving above Allahabad should have guns with them, and also intelligent officers (civil or military) acquainted with the country. The detachment of her Majesty's 84th came here a fortnight ago with only cloth clothes. It is important to see that others coming up are properly dressed and cared for. We look most anxiously for news. I trust that all the China troops are coming, and that large indents have been made on England."

"June 24 (*To Mr. Court*). I have written many times, but received no answer. I am very anxious for news, as all my communications have been cut off during the last twenty days. We are well and comfortable now, both in cantonment and in the city, but we are threatened by the mutineers from several directions. We are well prepared for them, having plenty of

1857.

provision and numerous guns. Our anxieties are for Cawnpore, which we cannot possibly succour, as the boats are on the Cawnpore side, &c. &c. Send us a cossid every other day. A native from Delhi tells us our troops are before Delhi, and had beaten the enemy. This seems authentic, and I doubt not the city is now in our hands, and that in a few weeks all will be comparatively settled; but pray remember Oude is the home of three-fourths of the rebels, and that already thousands are flocking to it, and that the runaways from Delhi will probably mostly come this way, and in desperation may have a shy at us. Next, then, to Cawnpore, we may require succour. A single European regiment and company of European artillery would enable me to take the field and knock to pieces all rebels and mutineers. Send on this letter to Government, and a copy of it to my son at Oakfield, Penrith, Cumberland, England. The health of the troops is generally good. I am well. Pray succour Cawnpore speedily. I am doing what I can to get Wheeler provisions, by offering large prices and large rewards, but fear I shall not succeed. We have had authentic intelligence of seven or eight regiments advancing against us, being only twenty miles off. We may be besieged forty-eight hours hence. There should be no delay in sending succour to us as well as to Cawnpore. Five hundred infantry and four guns, with two hundred native infantry, or police, would be safe under an intelligent officer. Once in Oude, we can assist the advance of a force." "June 26 (*To Colonel Neill*). Your letter of the 20th has reached, and has found us all well and comfortable at Lucknow, though some regiments, with many guns, are collecting eighteen miles off, with the avowed intention of attacking us. This they will hardly do, though they may try and plunder the more distant portions of this immense city. They wisely collect at distances beyond a long march, or we should, even now, have beaten them up with three hundred Europeans and four guns, which we can always spare for one day at a time as long as we are not actually besieged. The health of the troops is improving. Delhi city was captured by our army on the 14th, when the rebels took refuge in the palace, which could not have held out many hours. This will have immense effect on the

1857.

country. We only heard the news to-day, and I pass it on to you, as the Cawnpore road is closed. General Wheeler is, I fear, in extremity, though I have been making every indirect effort to help him. To help him otherwise we have not the means. I hope you have been able to post up five hundred Europeans with four guns. The very news of their approach would probably relieve Wheeler, as there is great dissension in the rebel camp. To help him, your succour must be speedy. Civil officers, or others well acquainted with the country, should accompany the troops, and every precaution taken to save them from the heat. The detachment, her Majesty's 89th, that came here had no light clothing or cap covers. Pray see to these points, as the lives of many men depend on them. There are good topos in which to encamp all the way to Cawnpore. Now that Delhi is taken,* you may be able to enlist Native Irregulars, who can be fairly relied on. Some should accompany each European detachment, to save them from fatigue duties. Not less than four hundred Europeans and four guns should move together as long as the Nana's force is in strength at Cawnpore. Detachments of four hundred to five hundred men with guns ought to overcome all opposition. Employ Hindoos rather than Mussulmans as Irregulars. On approaching Cawnpore care should be taken against treachery. The Nana is a Mahratta, and an adept in deceit. Old Burkundaazes will, perhaps, be the safest Irregulars. All was quiet at Mynpooree, Agra, and Etaweh on the 17th, and now that Delhi is taken, affairs will doubtless improve. Pray give us your exact numbers, also those at Benares and Dinapore. Send this on to the Governor-General, and send its purport by telegraph. Show it also to Mr. Chester and Court, and ask them to write to me. I want full particulars of the events of the last twenty days at Allahabad and other places downwards. Is all quiet in the Madras Presidency? Have the China troops reached Calcutta, or when are they expected? The runaways from Delhi will come in thousands to Oude, where we must already have hardly less than a hundred thousand. I don't fear them as regards Lucknow, but until we have another European regiment we cannot expect

* It need not be said that this was altogether a mistake.

1857.

to introduce order into the province. At present every villain is abroad, and an internecine war prevails in every quarter. Two columns, each with five hundred Europeans, would soon put all right, but the more delay the more difficulty, as daily new parties are committing themselves. Mr. Court and Chester will write to me fully, I hope. I wish a copy of this letter to be sent to my son in England.”*

“Sir Henry Lawrence is doing admirably at Lucknow. All safe there.”—Such were the words in which letter after letter from the Governor-General to the authorities in England communicated the confidence felt by Lord Canning in the Oude Commissioner. And so fully was that confidence shared by the Home Government, that when the Court of Directors and the Queen’s Government, warned by the critical state of our relations in India, found it necessary to nominate a new Governor-General provisionally, in the event of the death or the retirement of Lord Canning, they had no hesitation in selecting Sir Henry Lawrence as the man to whom, above all others, they could most confidently entrust, in that emergency, the supreme direction of affairs.

But it was the saddest thing of all—nothing so sad in the history of the calamities of the Indian Mutiny—that he never lived to place this crown upon his brows. Such a recognition at the last would have healed all his old wounds—would have been ample compensation to him for all the crosses he had endured. No soldier of the Company’s army had ever been so honoured. Of all the Englishmen in India, he was held to be the one best able, in a crisis of unexampled magnitude, to hold the helm and weather the storm, if by any mischance or caprice Canning had been removed from the scene. All that his honourable ambition ever sought would have been thus attained, and in the completeness of his career he would have found perfect satisfaction. But it was otherwise ordained by God. His end was rapidly approaching. He was well-nigh worn-out with labour and anxiety, and, if the strong resolute will had not sustained him, his bodily frailty would have succumbed to the pressure. Once, it has been shown, he was compelled to rest and to recruit, but the supreme authority, which he relinquished to a Provisional Council, was soon

* Sent also to General Havelock.

1857.

resumed.* He had before this, with some forebodings, perhaps, of the future, placed on record his wishes with respect to the succession to the civil and military offices which he held. "If anything happens to me," he wrote, "during the present disturbances, I recommend that Colonel Inglis succeed me in command, and that Major Banks should be appointed to the command of one of the posts. There should be NO SURRENDER. I commend my children and the Lawrence Asylums to Government." And he had sent a telegram to the Governor-General, saying: "If anything happens to me during the present disturbances, I earnestly recommend that Major Banks succeed me as Chief Commissioner, and Colonel Inglis in command of the troops, until better times arrive. This is no time for punctilio as regards seniority. They are the right men—in fact, the only men for the places. My Secretary entirely concurs with me on the above points." It seemed, indeed, to be far more within the scope of God's providence at that time that there should be needed men to take his place than that he should ever live to succeed to the higher place of another.

And so the month of June wore to its close; and Henry Lawrence, ever regardless of self, toiled on day and night, with unwearying vigilance and unfailing energy, until those about him marvelled how he could bear up against such an incessant strain on mind and body. He seemed never to rest. At all hours of the night he was up and doing. That he derived great "access of unexpected strength" from prayer, is not to be doubted. Often those who entered his room found him upon his knees praying for wisdom from the Almighty Councillor, and imploring mercy for the poor

* It was on the 9th of June that Lawrence appointed this Council. The order was thus: "As Dr. Fayrer states that it is imperatively necessary for my health that I should remain perfectly quiet for the next twenty-four hours, I appoint Mr. Gubbins, Mr. Ommaney, Lieutenant-Colonel Inglis, Major Anderson, and Major Banks to be a council to conduct the affairs of the province until I feel myself sufficiently convalescent to resume the government.—H. M. LAWRENCE, June 9, 1857." The Council sat on the 10th and 11th. On

the morning of the 12th, Lawrence, eager to return to his work, obtained a certificate, somewhat reluctantly given, to the effect that, although he was capable of resuming his duties, he should be spared as much mental and bodily fatigue as possible. Upon this, Mr. Gubbins recommended that the powers of the Council should be continued, but that all important questions should be referred to the General. Against this the other four members voted, and the powers of the Council ceased.

people committed to his charge, against whom our enemies were raging so furiously. He knew that the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, and he never ceased from his intercessions. 1857.

On the last day of June there was a great and a sad crisis in the affairs of that little body of Christian men. Tidings were brought in by our scouts that large bodies of the mutinous regiments were advancing upon Lucknow. And when Lawrence heard that the enemy had thus collected in force, with the probable intention of making straight upon Lucknow, he determined to go out to meet them. He had always, in the weak state of his garrison, been opposed to such offensive movements, thinking that the best chance of present safety and of future victory lay in husbanding his strength for the work of defence. But there were some about him, the most prominent of whom was Mr. Gubbins, whose irrepressible gallantry led them to counsel a more forward policy; and Lawrence appears now to have thought that the opportunity was a favourable one for trying this bolder and more pronounced style of action, and threatening the enemy at a distance from the city walls. So, on the morning of the 30th of June, he went out at the head of a force of all arms, and marched towards Newaubgung, where his scouts told him that the enemy had been seen in large numbers; but whether he designed to draw them into action, or whether, as some believed, he contemplated little more than an armed reconnaissance, is not very clear. He said afterwards that he had acted against his own judgment, and he reproached himself for having been moved by the fear of man to undertake so hazardous an enterprise.*

* Upon this subject, Mr. Gubbins has written in his book: "Upon his death-bed Sir Henry referred to the disaster at Chinhut, and said that he had acted against his own judgment from the fear of man. I have often inquired, but I never learnt the name of any one who had counselled the step which resulted in so severe a calamity." This may be true; but it is not quite the whole truth. It is probable that no one

especially recommended this individual movement; but it is certain that Mr. Gubbins himself was continually urging Sir Henry Lawrence to send out a force to meet the enemy. But what he certainly did with respect to this particular affair was to ridicule the idea that the enemy were advancing in any formidable strength. When the news of the advance of the mutineers was first brought in, the circular that went round for the in-

1857.

Some six or seven miles from Lucknow, Lawrence halted his force, and, dismounting from his horse, walked into a grove which skirted the roadside, and remained there for half an hour—it is believed, instant in prayer. When he emerged, he remounted, and gave his orders for the troops to advance. They had not proceeded far when they came upon the whole

formation of the chief officers of the garrison stated that the man who brought the information said he could not speak with certainty as to the numbers, but that he heard there were eight or nine regiments of infantry and one of cavalry, with twelve guns. Mr. Gubbins appended four notes of exclamation to the passage, and wrote beneath it, "*What stuff!*—M. G.;" and not satisfied with this, endorsed the paper with the same words. But we now learn from Mr. Gubbins himself ("*Mutinies in Oudh*," pp. 189-190) that the rebel force consisted of nine and a half regiments of infantry, twelve guns, and seven or eight hundred cavalry. It must be added, in the cause of historic truth, that after the death of Sir Henry Lawrence, Brigadier Inglis took some pains to elicit the facts, and that letters were addressed to several Staff-officers on the subject. One answered: "I could not positively state that Mr. Gubbins addressed a letter to the late Sir Henry Lawrence urging him to send troops to Seetapoor, or to Chinhut, or to Cawnpore, or anywhere else, but I have a decided though general impression that he did do so; and, if I am not mistaken, Mahommedabad and Nawabgunge, on the Fyzabad road, might be included in the list of places to which Mr. Gubbins thought it would be beneficial to send troops. . . . I have so often heard Sir Henry Lawrence talk on this subject, especially dwelling on the pertinacity with which Mr. Gubbins pressed him, that I could, without much difficulty, show, if necessary, the line of argument the Brigadier-General adopted." Another wrote: "Several times the Brigadier-General (Lawrence) asked me how I could equip detachments of Europeans which Mr. Gubbins proposed sending to Seetapore, Cawnpore, Mullaabad, and Nawabgunge; and if it were possible to transport them within certain fixed times on elephants. On these occasions I perfectly remember Sir Henry appeared irritated and annoyed, and always pronounced such expeditions

most rash, unsafe, and utterly impracticable. The feasibility of the proposed enterprises was openly discussed by all the members of the Staff, both in Sir H. Lawrence's room, and often at his table, and I always heard that Mr. Gubbins had advocated the movements." A third said, in reply: "I have the honour to state, for the information of the Brigadier commanding at Lucknow (Inglis), that I perfectly remember that in the latter part of June last many letters were received by the late Sir H. M. Lawrence from Mr. Gubbins. Several of these letters were given to me to read, but not all, as they did not belong to my department, but to that of the Military Secretary. I, however, generally heard the purport of them discussed, which was the advisability of sending an European force over to Cawnpore, at another time to Seetapore and Chinhut, and also the advantages to be gained by sending a force out to meet the rebel army at Nawabgunge. I always heard the late Brigadier-General express himself as strongly opposed to the above movements." And again another officer, who had peculiar opportunities of observation, said: "Sir Henry Lawrence did from time to time complain to me that the indomitable personal courage of Mr. Gubbins, his excessive zeal and ardent temperament, had caused him to be the over-earnest, importunate, and too public advocate of military movements which, according to Sir Henry's personal judgment, could only have ended disastrously. He more than once deplored to me, as a calamity which weighed down his spirits, that owing to the chivalric ardour and the eloquent fervour with which Mr. Gubbins urged his views, and the publicity which he gave to them, the Finance Commissioner had come to be regarded by some of the more spirited and less experienced officers of the force as the real man for the crisis." Nothing further need be said to explain the meaning of Lawrence's dying words.

1857.

body of the enemy, consisting, it is said, of fifteen or sixteen thousand men, with more than thirty pieces of ordnance. The action at once commenced, but it was soon little more than a rout. Our native artillerymen cut the traces of their guns and went over to the enemy.* Colonel Case, at the head of the 32nd Regiment, fell gallantly, and his men were disheartened by his fall. It is a wonder that any of our people, deserted and betrayed as they were, escaped from such an overwhelming multitude of the enemy. Our loss was very heavy. It is probable, indeed, that the whole of the 32nd Regiment would have been destroyed but for an act which manifested Henry Lawrence's coolness and fertility of resource in this distressing conjuncture. When there was not a shot left in our tumbrils, he caused a gun to be drawn up and portfires to be lighted as if he were about to fire, and under cover of this harmless piece of ordnance the Europeans were enabled to retreat. It is related that he was always in the most exposed parts of the field, riding from point to point, amidst a terrific fire of grape, round-shot, and musketry. It is added, that he was deeply moved by the sufferings of our people. He wrung his hands in agony of mind, and was heard to say, "My God! my God! and I brought them to this!"†

Sir Henry Lawrence, who had little anticipated such a catastrophe—who had not, indeed, thought that a general action would have been the result of the reconnaissance—had sent out his carriage, intending to return in it; but in the

* They were the Artillery of the Oude Irregular Force. In the well-known report of the Defence of Lucknow, which bears the name of Colonel (Sir John) Inglis, but the narrative portion of which is supposed to have been written by Mr. (now Sir George) Couper, who was continually by Lawrence's side, as secretary at home and as aide-de-camp abroad, the story is thus told: "The Oude artillerymen and drivers were traitors. They overturned the guns into ditches, cut the traces of their horses, and abandoned them, regardless of the remonstrances and exertions of their own officers and of those of Sir Henry Lawrence's Staff, headed by the Brigadier-General in person, who him-

self drew his sword upon the rebels. Every effort to induce them to stand having proved ineffectual, the force, exposed to a vastly superior fire of artillery, and completely surrounded on both sides by an overpowering body of infantry and cavalry, which actually got into our rear, was compelled to retire, with the loss of three pieces of artillery, which fell into the hands of the enemy, in consequence of the rank treachery of the Oude gunners, and with a very grievous list of killed and wounded. The heat was dreadful, the gun-ammunition was expended, and the almost total want of cavalry to protect our rear, made our retreat most disastrous."

† Rees's "Siege of Lucknow."

1857.

retreat which followed the disastrous action at Chinhut, the horses were required for other purposes, and Lawrence, physically prostrated, was conveyed to Lucknow on a gun-carriage. "Weak and exhausted by illness before he started," says Colonel Inglis, "it was a miracle he returned alive. I met him at the door of the Residency as he returned. It needed no words to explain the result; the utterly exhausted state of our poor fellows as they came in told its own tale. An overwhelming force, aided by the defection of our native gunners, brought about the catastrophe."

"This morning," wrote Lawrence to Havelock, soon after the return of his defeated force to Lucknow, "we went out eight miles to meet the enemy, and we were defeated, and lost five guns, through the misconduct chiefly of our native artillery, many of whom have deserted. The enemy have followed us up, and we have now been besieged for four hours, and shall probably to-night be surrounded. The enemy are very bold, and our Europeans very low. I look on our position now as ten times as bad as it was yesterday—indeed, it is very critical; we shall be obliged to concentrate, *if we are able*; we shall have to abandon much supplies, and to blow up much powder. Unless we are relieved quickly, say in fifteen or twenty days, we shall hardly be able to maintain our position. We lost three officers killed this morning, and several wounded: Colonel Case, Captain Stephen, and Mr. Brackenbury." And forwarding this through Mr. Tucker, at Benares, he said: "The annexed bad news speaks for itself, and shows the urgent necessity of speedy success. Our position is *very* critical. Telegraph this both to Allahabad, in case my cossid there fails, and also to Calcutta."

There was nothing more to be done but to withdraw within the Residency,* and to prepare to withstand a siege. Our other post, the Muchee-Bhawn, was abandoned; the guns were spiked; the ammunition exploded; the works, as far as possible, destroyed; and our people withdrawn. The enemy were now swarming around us, and the part of the Residency—an upper room—which Sir Henry Lawrence occupied was

* By this is to be understood not merely the Resident's house, but a cluster of buildings, or part of the town occupied

by our officers or establishment; in short, the English "quarter."

1857.

exposed to a merciless fire of shot and shell. On the 1st of July, a shell burst in his room; and the officers about him all endeavoured to persuade the General to move to a safer part of the building; but thinking that it was the best spot from which to superintend the defence, he refused to change his quarters. That this was a fatal error was too soon made manifest, for on the following day, as he was lying on his couch, a shell burst beside him, and grievously shattered his thigh. His nephew, Mr. George Lawrence, immediately summoned Dr. Fayrer to his assistance, and when Sir Henry saw him, he asked at once how long he had to live. When the doctor answered "about three days," he expressed astonishment that so long a term had been granted to him, and seemed to think that he should pass away before the end of it. As shot and shell were continually striking against the Residency, Dr. Fayrer caused the wounded man to be removed to his own house, which was more sheltered from the enemy's artillery, and there a consultation of medical officers was held, and it was determined that to attempt amputation would be only to increase suffering and to shorten life.*

Then Henry Lawrence prepared himself for death. First of all, he asked Mr. Harris, the chaplain, to administer the Holy Communion to him. In the open verandah, exposed to a heavy fire of musketry, the solemn service was performed, many officers of the garrison tearfully communicating with their beloved chief. This done, he addressed himself to those about him. "He bade an affectionate farewell to all," wrote

* "I examined his wound," wrote Dr. Fayrer, in a letter to a friend, "and found that a large fragment of the shell had shattered the upper part of the thigh-bone, passing through the thigh and glutial region of the left side. I believe also that the bones of the pelvis were injured. The femoral artery was not injured, as the wound was behind it. I immediately applied the necessary bandages to stanch the bleeding, which was not very profuse, and supported the fractured limb with bandages and pillows as much as possible. As he was faint and distressed by the shock, I gave him stimulants freely. . . . Of course I

consulted other medical men, among them Dr. Ogilvie, who also remained with him constantly, as to the propriety or possibility of an operation; but all agreed with me that the injury was of too grave a character to leave any hope of recovery. Indeed, as I was satisfied that the pelvis was fractured, I never entertained the idea of amputation at the hip-joint. I moreover believe that had the thigh-bone only been fractured, Sir Henry could not have borne the shock of an amputation, which would thus only have shortened his valuable life."

1857.

one who was present at this sad and solemn meeting, "and of several he asked forgiveness for having at times spoken harshly, and begged them to kiss him. One or two were quite young boys, with whom he had occasion to find fault, in the course of duty, a few days previously. He expressed the deepest humility and repentance for his sins, and his firm trust in our blessed Saviour's atonement, and spoke most touchingly of his dear wife, whom he hoped to rejoin. At the utterance of her name his feelings quite overcame him, and he burst into an uncontrollable fit of weeping, which lasted some minutes. He again completely broke down in speaking of his daughter, to whom he sent his love and blessing. . . . Then he blessed his nephew George, who was kneeling by his bedside, and told him he had always loved him as his own son. . . . He spoke to several present about the state of their souls, urging them to pray and read their Bibles, and endeavour to prepare for death, which might come suddenly, as in his own case. To nearly each person present he addressed a few parting words of affectionate advice—words which must have sunk deeply into all hearts. There was not a dry eye there, and many seemingly hard rough men were sobbing like children."

And ever mingling, in these last hours, with the kindly and affectionate feelings of the man, were the sterner thoughts of the leader. Passing away, as he was, from the scene, he had to make new arrangements for the future defence of the beleaguered garrison. He knew what was his duty, and though it pained him to set aside one who believed that he had the best right to succeed him in his civil duties, he felt that he had chosen his successor wisely. He now urged upon Major Banks, and all present, the imperative necessity of holding out to the very last, and of never making terms with the enemy. "Let every man," he said, "die at his post; but never make terms. God help the poor women and children." He often repeated these last words. His heart was very heavy with the thought of these helpless little ones, not knowing what dreadful lot might be in store for them. But he thought of his country most of all; and the noble words with which he had been familiar, as a boy in the Derry

school, were ever present to his thoughts, and his constant counsel was, "NO SURRENDER."*

1857.

The instructions which he gave to Major Banks, in the midst of his sufferings, and with the hand of death upon him, were of a detailed and precise character, and were, on leaving Lawrence's room, thus recorded by his successor :

" I. Reserve fire ; check all wall-firing.

II. Carefully register ammunition for guns and small arms in store. Carefully register daily expenditure as far as possible.

III. Spare the precious health of Europeans in every possible way from shot and shell.

IV. Organise working parties for night labour.

V. Entrench—entrench—entrench. Erect traverses. Cut off enemy's fire.

VI. Turn every horse out of the entrenchment, except enough for four guns. Keep Sir Henry Lawrence's horse Ludakee ; it is a gift to his nephew, George Lawrence.

VII. Use the state prisoners as a means of getting in supplies by gentle means if possible, or by threats.

VIII. Enrol every servant as bildar, or carrier of earth. Pay liberally—double, quadruple.

IX. Turn out every native who will not work, save menials who have more than abundant labour.

X. Write daily to Allahabad or Agra.

XI. Sir Henry Lawrence's servants to receive one year's pay ; they are to work for any other gentlemen who want them, or they may leave if they prefer to do so.

XII. Put on my tomb only this : " Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty. May God have mercy on him."

XIII. Take an immediate inventory of all natives, so as to know who can be used as bildars, &c.

XIV. Take an immediate inventory of all supplies and food, &c. Take daily average."

* And very proud, too, is Derry of her foster-sons—the Lawrences and Robert Montgomery—and of the heroism with which they clung to the grand old

war-cry of the city. I have seen and heard the outward expressions of the admiration of the men of Derry.

1857.

He gave many sorrowing thoughts, also, to his foster-children in the Lawrence Asylum; and when he was not capable of uttering many words, from time to time he said, alternately with his prayers for the women and children, "Remember the Asylum; do not let them forget the Asylum." He told the chaplain that he wished to be buried very privately, "without any fuss," in the same grave with any men of the garrison who might die about the same time. Then he said, speaking rather to himself than to those about him, of his epitaph—" *Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty. May God have mercy upon him.*"*

He lingered till the beginning of the second day after he was stricken down, suffering occasionally acute paroxysms of pain, but having many blessed intervals of rest; and at last passed away very tranquilly, "like a little child falling asleep," about eight o'clock A.M. on the 4th of July.† "He looked so peaceful and happy," said one who entered the room just after his spirit had departed, "with the most beautiful expression of calm joy on his face. We could not but thank God that his sufferings were over, feeling sure that he was at rest."

After a little while it became necessary to move the body, and some European soldiers were sent for to lift the couch on which it lay. Before they did so, one of the party raised the sheet which covered the face of his beloved chief, and kissed him reverently on the forehead; then the others stooped down and did likewise; and, having so done, bore the body to the verandah. That evening it was buried, in a soldier's grave,

* It has been stated that he said: "I should like, too, a text, 'To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against Him.' It was on my dear wife's tomb." But I have been assured, on the best authority, that this is an error.

† "The day before, at his own request," wrote Dr. Fayrer, "I had given him chloroform when the spasms came on. It relieved him at the time, but it clouded his intellect afterwards. I therefore did not repeat it, nor did he wish it. In such cases, it should, I think, unless the pain is very severe, be always avoided, for it loses time, which is very precious to the sufferer. On the

whole, I do not think that Sir Henry suffered as much pain as has been supposed, and the expression 'lingered in great agony until the morning of the 4th,' is, though a natural one, an exaggeration. He received the wound when in a delicate state of health, worn with anxiety, heavy responsibility, and great physical and mental labour; his constitution had suffered from old disease, and he sank, perhaps, sooner than a younger man would have done under the effects of the wound. . . . The little that could be done to alleviate pain and to smoothe his passage to the grave, I did for him, and delighted should I have been had I been able to do more."

with the corpses of four others who had fallen on that day ; and so furious was the raging of the enemy at the time, that I believe not a single officer of the garrison saw the remains of his beloved General lowered into the grave. But there was not one amongst them who did not feel that he best did honour to the dead by following his great example, and being found ever at his post.

1857.

Rough and imperfect as is this brief sketch of Sir Henry Lawrence's career, I hope that it has in some measure set forth the character of the man, and the sources of his greatness. It will not, I trust, be long before a life so eminently that of a "Christian Warrior"—a life so fitted to encourage and sustain in well-doing by the beauty of its example—will be fully written by one far more capable than I am of doing justice to the theme.* What Wordsworth wrote, Lawrence acted. The ideal portrait of the "Christian Warrior," which the one had drawn, was ever before the other as an exemplar. He read it often ; he thought of it continually ; he quoted it in his writings. He tried to conform his own life and to assimilate his own character to it : and he succeeded, as all men succeed who are truly in earnest. But if I were asked what especially it was that more than all perfected the picture of his character, I should say that it was the glow of romance that flushed it all as with a glory from above. There was in all that he did a richness and tenderness of sentiment that made it not only good but beautiful. He used to say—and nothing was ever said more truly—"It is the due admixture of romance and reality that best carries a man through life." No words can express better than his own what I wish to say in this place, for no words can more clearly set forth what it was that made the peculiar greatness of the man. "The quality," he wrote in 1844,† "variously designated romance or enthusiasm, poetry or ideality, is not to be despised as the mere delusion of a heated brain ; but is to be valued as an energy imparted to the human mind, to prompt and sustain its noblest efforts.

* It is understood that Sir Herbert Edwardes has been engaged for some years upon a "Life of Henry Lawrence." It will assuredly be worthy of the subject.

† Article, "Romance and Reality of Indian Life," in the fourth number of the *Calcutta Review*.

1857.

We would urge on the young especially, that, not that they should repress enthusiasm, but that they should cultivate and direct the feeling. Undisciplined romance deals in vague aspirations after something better and more beautiful than it has yet seen; but it is apt to turn in disgust from the thousand homely details and irksome efforts essential to the accomplishment of anything really good, to content itself with dreams of glorious impossibilities. Reality, priding itself on a steady plodding after a moderate tangible desideratum, laughs at the aimless and unprofitable vision of romance; 'but the hand cannot say to the eye, I have no need of thee!' Where the two faculties are duly blended, reality pursues a straight rough path to a desirable and practicable result; while romance beguiles the road by pointing out its beauties, by bestowing a deep and practical conviction that even in this dark and material existence there may be found a joy which a stranger intermeddleth not—a light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." And truly upon Henry Lawrence this light beamed more and more until the perfect day dawned upon him, and his work was accomplished upon earth.

I do not think that I shall be accused of partiality or exaggeration if I say that, looking not so much at what he did as at what he was, the future historian of India will place him second to none in the great descriptive roll of her Heroes. For perhaps in no one, who has lived and died to maintain in good repute our great Anglo-Indian Empire, shall we find so lustrous a combination of ennobling and endearing qualities. Few men, at any time and in any country, have been at once so admired and so beloved. People of all kinds speak of him with an enthusiasm which has so much of personal affection in it, that it seems sometimes as if the world were full of his private friends. And yet many who thus spoke of him had never seen him in the flesh. Those who knew him, and knew him well, and had been in habits of intimacy with him, were ever as proud of his friendship as Fulke Greville was of the friendship of Sir Philip Sydney. He had some points of resemblance to Sydney, but there were also characteristic divergences; and if we could conceive a fusion of a Sydney and a Cromwell, we might arrive nearly at a just conception

of the character of Henry Lawrence. He was very chivalrous and tender; he was courteous, but he was not courtly; he had profound religious convictions, and in the hour of difficulty and danger he communed with his God, and felt that, whether the issue were life or death, it was all for the best. But the ruggedness of Henry Lawrence was all on the outer side; he was personally one of the most gentle, loving, and compassionate of men; and, in his relations with the great world around him, he was essentially charitable and forbearing. There was no iconoclasm in his nature. He grieved over the errors which were ever patent before him; but he had a great pity for those who professed them, and it was his desire rather to persuade than to break.

I might add to these feeble words many tributes of others, but they press upon me in such numbers that I know not how to select. I cannot forget, however, that when a great meeting was held in London to do honour to the memory of Sir Henry Lawrence, Lord Stanley, who had visited him in India, threw a wreath upon his bier bright with the flowers of unquestionable truth. "Sir Henry Lawrence," he said, "rose to eminence step by step, not by favour of any man, certainly not by subserviency either to ruling authorities or to popular ideas, but simply by the operation of that natural law which in troubled times brings the strongest mind, be it where it may, to the post of highest command. I knew Sir Henry Lawrence six years ago. Travelling in the Punjab, I passed a month in his camp, and it then seemed to me, as it does now, that his personal character was far above his career, eminent as that career has been. If he had died a private and undistinguished person, the impress of his mind would still have been left on all those who came personally into contact with him. I thought him, as far as I could judge, sagacious and far-seeing in matters of policy; and I had daily opportunity of witnessing, even under all the disadvantages of a long and rapid journey, his constant assiduity in the despatch of business. But it was not the intellectual qualities of the man which made upon me the deepest impression. There was in him a rare union of determined purpose, of moral as well as physical courage, with a singular frankness and courtesy of demeanour which was something

1857. more than we call courtesy ; for it belonged not to manners but to mind—a courtesy shown equally to Europeans and natives. Once know him, and you could not imagine him giving utterance to any sentiment which was harsh, or petty, or self-seeking.” Another, who knew him well, and who had ever, like Lawrence, a large-hearted philanthropy, thus wrote of his honoured friend :* “ Every Englishman will forgive me if I wander from my subject for a moment, to offer my humble tribute of affection to the man who, perhaps above all others, has done honour to the name of Englishman in India. To know Sir Henry was to love him. In 1853, when I was on my way to Lahore, and Sir Henry was leaving the Punjab, I had witnessed the unbounded regard which all classes displayed to his person. During my term of office at Lahore, I had occasion, in the discharge of my public duty, to prosecute and bring to punishment men who owed their appointments to Sir Henry’s favour. Instead of resentment, he honoured me with increased regard, acknowledging that I had exercised a necessary severity. In March, 1857, at Agra, when on his way to take charge of his new duties as Chief Commissioner of Oude, I had much daily and unreserved intercourse with Sir Henry. I found him, as it were, ripening fast, alike for that goal of human glory which he was soon to attain, and for that sublimer change which so quickly awaited him. His heart seemed overflowing with Christian charity. I remember that, in returning a volume of *Memoirs of Bishop Sandford*, he wrote to call my attention to the following passage, which he had marked with a pencil : ‘ My fears for those who retain a spirit of unforgiveness are overpowering. I will sincerely declare to you that I could not myself pray to God, or ask His pardon for my many transgressions, before I go to bed at night, with any comfort, or with any hope of being heard, unless I were conscious that I did from my heart forgive as I ask to be forgiven.’ (Vol. ii. pp. 106-7.) When next I met him, as we walked to the early church service (it was the time of Lent), he poured out his heart on the beautiful topic of Christian forgiveness, adding, that he had sent a copy of the extract above quoted to a distinguished officer, once his friend, who had taken deep offence at some public act of Sir Henry’s. For every child

* Charles Raikes—“ Notes on the Revolt in the North-West Provinces.”

1857.

that he met in my own family, in the missionary or other public schools, he had a word of kindness or encouragement. Incidentally he told me that the secret of his ability to support those public institutions with which his name will for ever be associated, was to be found in his abstinence to the utmost from all sorts of personal expense." One more tribute must be cited, because it comes from one with a fine sense of the heroic, who had never been within the reach of the personal influence of the soldier-statesman, and who merely recorded what all men said : "What a grand heroic mould that mind was cast in ! What a pure type of the Christian soldier ! From what I have heard of Henry Lawrence, of his natural infirmities, of his immense efforts to overcome them ; of his purity of thought, of his charity, of his love, of the virtues which his inner life developed as he increased in years ; of his devotion to duty, to friendship, and to Heaven ; I am led to think that no such exemplar of a truly good man can be found in the ranks of the servants of any Christian State in the latter ages of this world."*

Of the loss that he was to India no tongue can speak in words equal to the occasion. "There is not, I am sure," said Lord Canning, "an Englishman in India who does not regard the loss of Sir Henry Lawrence, in the present circumstances of the country, as one of the heaviest of public calamities. There is not, I believe, a native of the provinces where he has held authority, who will not remember his name as that of a friend and generous benefactor to the races of India." He had, indeed, above all Indian statesmen whom I have known, a large-hearted sympathy with the natives of India, which caused him to regard with equal justice and benignity the relations of the great British Empire with both the people of our own territories and the Princes of the independent or tributary States. It is probable that in the limited space at my disposal, I have not sufficiently illustrated his political opinions ; and it has been my object to avoid controversial topics. But I may mention here that Lord Canning wrote to him that he had always heard that he was a friend of the "blue blood," and Lawrence did not seek to deny it. He believed that sound policy, based upon a conformity with the genius of the nation, equally with abstract notions of justice,

* William Russell's "Diary in India."

1857. taught us to adhere to the spirit of our treaties, to support the native Princes, and to maintain the aristocracy of the country. One who had known him all his life, who had served with him in the Punjab, and had risen to high honour by following in his footsteps, wrote to me, saying: "His whole energies were devoted to the amelioration of his fellow-creatures, whether black or white. He showed the deepest feelings of compassion and tenderness towards the nobles and chiefs who, having fought for their country, had lost it, and came under our rule. He knew how difficult it was for them to at once fall into the ways of our Government, and he sympathised with the brave soldiers whom our army supplanted and left without provision. He felt, whilst exercising his own feelings of benevolence, he was best serving his Government, and he had the faculty of influencing all around him, and those who served under him, with the same spirit. This was very striking; and who can tell what an importance this was, what his philanthropy did in turning the tide of the Punjabees in our favour in 1857. I believe that his spirit, and the spirit he inculcated, did much towards their loyalty and devotion to us. . . . He was always known amongst us as the Howard of the Punjab. I do not think a day ever passed that he did not visit the gaol where he happened to be. He dropped in at all hours, and the advanced state of gaol management, at an early period of our rule in the Punjab, was mainly owing to him. After a party at Government House of an evening, it was a common thing for him to say to the gentlemen, 'I am going down to the gaol; come with me and see the prisoners.' And down all would go, he leading the way, and whilst going through the wards at midnight, he was discussing gaol matters, and how best to provide for their better care and reformation. It was impossible for those under him to be with him and not catch some of his spirit."

There is a monument to his memory in the great metropolitan Cathedral of St. Paul; but the grandest monument of all is to be found in the Asylums which bear his name.

GENERAL NEILL.

[BORN 1810.—DIED 1857.]

OF the heroic lives, which I have hitherto endeavoured to 1810—57.
 illustrate in these pages, not one has represented the career of
 a soldier pure and simple. I have written of men, soldiers
 by profession, bearing military rank; men who had learned
 the theory and practice of war; who had seen great armies
 in motion; who had faced the danger of battle and had died
 by the hand of the enemy; but who, since the days of their
 youth, had been but little surrounded by the ordinary accom-
 paniments of regimental life. They were diplomatists, indeed,
 rather than soldiers. But diplomacy is rougher work in the
 East than in the West. It exposes a man to all the dangers
 of military life, and often without its protections. It sends
 him on detached and dangerous service, to face, alone and
 unsupported, a barbarous enemy, and at all times renders
 him a conspicuous mark for the malice of revengeful anta-
 gonists. In such diplomatic, or “political,” employment as
 this, the servants of the East India Company were enabled,
 when in the early vigour of their years, before their health
 had been wasted or their energies broken by long exposure to
 the severities of the climate, to attain to high and responsible
 office, and perhaps to some irregular command. But in the
 purely military service, the inexorable necessities of the
 seniority system seldom permitted men to rise to high com-
 mand until they had lost their capacity for it. Exceptions
 there were; but this was the rule. So it has happened that
 the names most distinguished in Indian history are the names
 of men who, reared as soldiers, have divested themselves of
 the trammels of military life, and sought service altogether
 independent of the chances of regimental promotion.

1810—57.

But I am about now to write of one who was all in all a soldier—who, not wanting capacity for the performance of these other duties, clung resolutely to the “great profession” of arms; one, who so loved that profession, that he suffered no allurements to detach him from it; and who lived and died with its harness on his back. Strong in the faith that his time would come, he waited patiently for his opportunity; and it came at last.

1810—25.

Childhood and
boyhood.

James George Neill, the eldest son of a Scotch gentleman of good family—Colonel Neill of Barnweill and Swendridgemuir in Ayrshire—was born on the 26th of May, 1810, in the neighbourhood of Ayr. From his very childhood he evinced a fearlessness and independence of spirit which promised well for his future career. He was not yet five years old, when he absented himself one morning from home, and excited considerable alarm in the household by his disappearance. He had been absent for many hours, when his father observed him coming with leisurely composure homeward, across a long dangerous embankment which confined the water of Barnweill Loch. His father went to meet him, and anxiously asked, “Where have you been, Jamie?” “Well,” replied the boy, “I just thought I’d like to take a long walk and look at all things as I went on, see, and see whether I could get home by myself! *And I have done it,*” he added, proudly; “and now I am to have no more nursery-maids running after me—I can manage myself.” His father said that he was right; and from that day the surveillance of nurses was withdrawn; and it was felt that Jamie might safely be left to look after himself.

He received his education at an academy in his native town, until at the age of fifteen he was removed to the Glasgow University. It was then intended that he should be trained for the law; but young Jamie had no taste for such a profession, or indeed for a sedentary life of any kind. He was active and robust; a stout walker, an intrepid horseman, a sure marksman; and he was eager to be a soldier. At that time, the Burmese war was attracting no little attention in Great Britain; and our youngsters, inspired by the marvellous pictures of grand battles upon elephant-back in a country of magnificent pagodas, which were widely diffused

at the time, burned to take part in the affray. James Neill, among others, was hot for Indian service. He said that India was the only country in which distinction could be won. So his father wisely resolved to gratify his wishes, and obtained a cadetship for him. He was not yet seventeen, when, in January, 1827, he sailed for Madras. Sir Thomas Munro, who was then Governor of that Presidency, had married a relative of Colonel Neill. He took the boy by the hand, and caused him to be appointed to the First European Regiment. 1827—35

Having quickly learnt the elements of his profession, young Neill devoted himself to his regimental duties, not only as one who was resolute to do what was demanded from him, but as one also who took the deepest interest in his work. The regiment, to which he had been posted, was one which had earned distinction on many fields, and which, being one of the very few European corps in the Company's service, was well-nigh sure to go to the front in any new operations on that side of India. But for a while there was profound peace in all parts of the country, and the strenuous realities of active service were only to him as dreams of the future. In the details of regimental duty, however, he found abundant occupation. The Madras European Regiment was stationed, during his first years of service, at Masulipatam; and the young subaltern acquitted himself so well that he was made Fort Adjutant, a post which he held until the corps marched to Kamptee. There the zeal and ability he displayed soon recommended him for employment on the regimental Staff, and he was appointed Quartermaster, and afterwards Adjutant, of the Madras Europeans. In the latter situation his fine soldierly qualities had much scope for exercise and development. It is hard to say how much not only the discipline but the happiness of a regiment depends upon the personal character of the Adjutant. Lieutenant Neill was not a man to look upon the soldier merely as an animated machine. He had the tenderest regard for the best interests of his men; and strove with all his might to reform their habits by instituting a better system of internal economy than that which in those days commonly obtained in our army. He did, indeed, almost all that, in these latter times, our

Subaltern life.

1835—37. Sanitary Commissions are wont to recommend for the improvement of the health, the happiness, and the moral character of the soldier. Whilst subjecting to proper regulation the sale of intoxicating liquors to the European soldier, he endeavoured to withdraw the ordinary inducements and temptations to hard drinking which too commonly beset him. By providing him with healthy occupation and harmless amusement he did much to improve the morality and the efficiency of the regiment. Adult schools and workshops were established; athletic exercises of different kinds were promoted; and in all these things the personal encouragement and example of Lieutenant Neill did much to secure their success.

Whilst still in the zealous performance of these duties, sustained and cheered by the thought of the good he was doing, Adjutant Neill took to himself a wife. On the 31st of October, 1835, he married Isabella, daughter of Colonel Warde, of the 5th Regiment of Bengal Cavalry, then employed in the "Political Department," as Assistant to the Resident at Nagpore. A soldier's daughter, she was fit to be a soldier's wife. And from that time forth, for more than twenty years, in war or in peace, in storm or in sunshine, he had not a thought which was not in some way associated with his "dearest Isy."

On the Staff.

But the climate of India and the work—for he was one who never spared himself—were beginning to make themselves felt; and Neill felt that the time was approaching when it would be necessary for him to seek renovated health from the fresh breezes of his native country. Two years after his marriage (1837) he obtained leave of absence to Europe for three years, and soon recovered all the strength and elasticity which he had lost beneath the Eastern sun. But the peace in which India had for some years been lapped, was now again about to be disturbed. There were rumours of the great movement into Central Asia, which afterwards took the substantive shape of the Afghan war. Panting for active service, and unwilling to lose even a remote chance of employment (and remote it ever was, for the Bengal and

Bombay regiments were well-nigh certain to be those engaged with the enemy), Neill determined, as soon as our measures were fairly shaped, to return to India long before the expiration of his leave. He returned in 1839, volunteered more than once for service in Afghanistan, but could not obtain the great boon that he so eagerly sought. But he had a fast friend in Sir Robert Dick, who was most desirous of serving him, and who eventually obtained for him an appointment on the General Staff as "Assistant-Adjutant-General of the Ceded Districts."

1838—54.

This appointment he held for some years, during the earlier portion of which he devoted his leisure to the work of writing a history of the distinguished regiment to which he belonged. It was published in 1843, under the title of an *Historical Record of the Madras European Regiment*. It is an excellent example of the class of literature to which it belongs—an elaborate monograph, exhaustive and complete—following the regiment from its very cradle up to the time in which he wrote. But his official duties were ever his first care; and they were so well performed that he received the repeated thanks of the General commanding the circle to which he was attached; and he would probably have risen in time to the highest place in his department, if he had not sought rather opportunities of serving in the field. An opportunity came at last. The second Burmese war commenced. Neill hastened to rejoin his regiment, which had been ordered on service; but on his way he was met by the announcement that he had been appointed Adjutant-General of the Madras troops under Sir Scudamore Steele. That war nearly cost him his life.

Of some of his Burmese experiences he has given an interesting and characteristic account in a letter to his cousin, Mr. Andrew Brisbane Neill. It exhibits in a striking point of view the independence and self-reliance of his nature, the resolute determination at all hazards to do what was right. For the good of the soldiers under him he was prepared even to face the frowns of superior military authority. "I was left at Rangoon to look after the Madras troops," he wrote on the 8th of April, 1854. "There was much to be done putting down these insurrections near Thurygyeen, Bassein, &c. There

The Second
Burmese war.

1853.

was no time to refer matters, and no one who could act; so I set to work, and did everything, issuing the usual orders as from Sir John Cheape, and he was very much pleased that everything was well done. I went on the plan to go at any fellow who showed his nose or a tip of it. I went at him at once. I rather made a mistake in sending too large a force against Nga Pyo, but our information had it that he was strongly entrenched and blockaded. I arranged that his position should be attacked on opposite quarters at the same time by troops moved simultaneously from Pegu and Thurygyeen. The fellow would not stand when it came to the push, but retired into the hills; our parties, however, entered his position at the points ordered. The same moment the fellow was followed into the hills by twenty of our men and a party of the Pegu Light Infantry, and although not taken, his party was dispersed, and all his luggage and plunder taken. At Bassein we tried another dodge, which is the best. Small parties were sent out. Shuldham of the 24th had ten artillerymen doing duty as infantry, and eight lambs, and a company of the 19th. The Burmese met him and caught it handsomely—the plan is to encourage them to stand, by sending there few men. Nga Pyo had again shown his nose, and a company of the 30th Native Infantry, and some fifteen or twenty Europeans, were ordered by me, before I left, to go at him from Thurygyeen. I expect to hear they have done for him. Backed in this way, our Sepoys will fight the Burmese well, but by themselves they have no chance. Jack Burmah is a superior animal, thoroughly despises the Sepoy—the Bengal most, on account of his giving himself airs about caste. A parcel of Bengal Sepoys are cooking their rice, the circle described all right and proper, a few Burmese looking on at a distance laughing and cracking their jokes; when the Bengalee has all but got the food ready, up walks one or two in a promiscuous manner, and down they squat with their sterns right in the circle. The row commences, and the Sepoys get well thrashed. Our Madras fellows get on better, as they have no caste compared with the others. I go home on the new regulations. I have not had time, at present, to understand them, but merely pulverise them as I think it right to do, not having any confidence in the Go-

1853.

vernment. I have had a shindy with the Commissariat Department, who are attempting to dodge our European soldiers out of European boots and blankets. . . . I have had a wiggling from the Commander-in-Chief expressing his Excellency's disapprobation of my reflecting on the Commissariat. However, as the want of the European boots and blankets—both of which have been ordered by the Government, and have not been supplied by their servants—will cause sickness and mortality among our European troops—indeed, has already caused it, and destroys their efficiency, and as the Governor-General is most anxious for the comfort and welfare of the European soldiers, I have taken the liberty of handing up the whole matter to his Lordship, and I have no doubt 'he will know the reason why' these things are not supplied. I have been thoroughly disgusted with the indifference evinced on these important subjects, and have not as yet stuck at a trifle in obtaining redress, and getting things put to rights."

But constant work and exposure, in a bad climate, nearly destroyed Neill, as it utterly destroyed others. Some of our finest officers were killed by strokes of the sun, and he well-nigh shared the same fate. He was struck down; the fall shattered him greatly, and for some time he was so torn by brain fever that there was small hope for his life. But by God's good providence he recovered sufficiently to be placed on board a screw-steamer then proceeding to England. "It would have been better," he wrote in a letter above quoted, dated from the Elphinstone Hotel, Madras, "if I had left Burmah and gone home some time since; however, I hope yet on the voyage home, when I shall be free from all bother, to make up for all the injury I may have sustained. I have been very fortunate in all my proceedings in Burmah, have given satisfaction to the Governor-General, and have been much flattered by his conduct towards me. Had it been possible for me to remain there, I should have either been at the head of the Staff or in some important appointment. I have fortunately had much to do, requiring me to act at once and with decision during the absence of Sir J. Cheape, and I have been lucky enough to do what was right. . . . I owe my recovery and life to the extreme care, attention, and kindness

1854—55. of Dr. Davidson. Had I been his brother he could not have done more for me.”

Service in
Turkey.

He reached England in the month of June, and was soon making rapid strides towards the complete recovery of his health. But the rest which he had promised himself was not in store for him. The war with Russia commenced. England was alive with the bustle and excitement of preparation for a great campaign. The formation of an Anglo-Turkish contingent—a Turkish force disciplined and commanded by English officers—was one of the auxiliary measures decreed by the British Government. Then the services of officers of the East India Company—men who had done work in their day, who were skilled in the discipline and command of irregular levies, capable of enduring hardships and privations, rough-and-ready fellows of the best kind—came suddenly into demand. And not only was there need of these, but need also of men who had seen in India large bodies of all arms in combination, and who had within them, seeking opportunity of development, the faculty of military organisation. General Vivian,* who had been Adjutant-General of the Madras Army, was selected to command the Anglo-Turkish force, and Colonel Neill was appointed his second in command. The opportunity was one for which he had longed. It was the desire of his soul to break through the trammels of the seniority system, which had kept him down, and to have full scope for the exercise of the power which he knew was within him—the power of successfully commanding large bodies of troops in the field. For this he was willing to resign the pleasures of home and the delights of domestic life; so he at once placed his services at the disposal of Government, and prepared himself to embark for Constantinople. “You will be not a little surprised to hear from me here *en route* to the Crimea,” he wrote to a friend, on the 3rd of April, 1855. “On the formation of the Turkish Contingent, I was asked if I wished to serve. I lost no time in saying ‘yes,’ leaving rank, pay, &c., entirely to the Government. I

* Now Sir Robert Vivian, K.C.B., Colonel of the Royal Madras Fusiliers, and member of the Council of India.

1855.

have never bothered them on the subject. My only request has been, 'Give me the highest command my rank will admit of. I stand next to General Vivian on the list of Company's officers. There is, I believe, great play making on the part of the Madras men for commands, and I have no influence or interest. I go out as a Colonel on the Staff. I had my passage as senior officer ordered in the *Victory* steamer from Portsmouth; but they were so dilatory in getting her ready, that I applied on Saturday afternoon to be allowed to go *viâ* Marseilles in order to get to Constantinople sooner. The reply was from the War Office: 'As Colonel Neill is General Vivian's second-in-command, it is of importance he should be at Constantinople as soon as possible: he is to go *viâ* Marseilles.' This I saw in writing, but it is strange none of us are yet gazetted, nor can we find out what commands we are to have. I asked one man in office: he let out inadvertently, 'Oh, you are to have a division,' but I can get nothing more. . . . I shall be about the first man out at my post, and if spared, you may depend upon it I will do something. I consider myself most fortunate . . . it is an opportunity of seeing service and acquiring professional knowledge that will stand me in good stead hereafter."

On his arrival in Turkey, Colonel Neill was appointed to command a division stationed in camp at Bayukdere, on the Bosphorus, where he remained for some time, exerting himself, with good success, to reduce his men to a state of efficiency and discipline. He spoke of the Turkish soldiers as being "good and steady, very smart under arms, and painstaking to a degree." But from the performance of these congenial duties he was soon called away. In another part of the Turkish force, for the discipline of which English officers were responsible, there was a chronic state of irregularity of the worst kind. The Bashi-Bazoukhs, commanded by General Beatson, were displaying all the violence and rapacity of their kind, little, if at all, restrained by the presence of their English officers. When intelligence of their excesses reached Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, our ambassador at Constantinople, he determined to inquire into them; and on the 27th of July, Neill was directed to repair to the Embassy, to receive instructions relative to the coming investigation.

1855. Full powers were given him to act as he might think best, and he was nominated President of the Military Commission formed to try the offenders. The Commission, which was composed partly of British officers and partly of Turkish officials, lost no time in commencing proceedings, and on the 28th of July two men were tried for desertion, and for having been concerned in the plunder of a treasure party. They were found guilty, and sentenced to receive, each, five hundred lashes, which were administered "with a stick to the enlivening strains of a quick march played by a band of music," according to the military customs of the country, when punishment is inflicted upon a culprit. This severe and sudden punishment produced good effects.

I have no inclination to enter into the history of General Beatson and the Bashi-Bazoukhs, which elicited a vast mass of official correspondence and a bundle of controversial pamphlets, distinguished by no little asperity. It is enough to record here that General Neill obtained a clear insight into the character of the Bashi-Bazoukhs, and the proper mode of dealing with them. "In the Sultan's time," he wrote, "when called out, they got two pounds of grain a day, often not that, no forage for horse, and no pay. They were expected to live by plunder. We give them daily rations, forage, and monthly pay. General Beatson ought, at first, to have checked their plundering propensities, but by his conduct he did the reverse—he allowed his men to leave their camp at all times armed to the teeth with pistols. No man carries less than two, always loaded. They ride into the town, and take anything they fancy, sometimes throw down a tenth of its value to the shopkeeper, and if he objects, it is either abuse, a licking, or out with the pistol and bang at him. In the country about they ride into gardens and vineyards, turn the horses loose to feed, pull and carry away the grapes, plunder the folds and flocks, take food and grain from the people, and ravish the women. All this has been proved beyond a doubt at the Court of Inquiry. The country people are deserting their properties, and the respectable families of this town have left and gone over to the European side : shops are all shut. General Beatson will not believe it—all lies, as he says—Russian intrigue, French hostility, &c."

1855—56.

Neill thought that with a fair system of discipline these unruly Bashis could be converted into splendid troops, and he expressed a detailed opinion to this effect, for which he received the thanks of the ambassador at Constantinople. Lord Stratford sent a despatch to General Beatson—"copy of which," wrote Neill, "he sends to me—in which, in the name of her Majesty's Government, he calls upon him to act at once according to my recommendations and put down excesses, or adhere to his resolution and resign the command into my hands. He also adds his testimony in favour of the soundness of my recommendations, and the discretion and calmness in the performance of a different duty, &c. This is satisfactory, as showing that I am all right. . . . I feel, if required to do it, *quite* equal to bringing the Bashi-Bazoukhs into order, and making excellent light cavalry of them—if not required to do so, I return to my infantry division none the worse for the experience and general insight into the service."

But neither with the Bashi-Bazoukhs, nor with his own infantry division, was the hope which he had so long entertained of doing active service in the field doomed to anything but disappointment. Sebastopol was taken. The war was brought to a close; and there was no further need of the services of the Anglo-Turkish Contingent. "The play is now up," he wrote from Yenikale on the 9th of April, 1856, "and it has certainly been provoking that we have been kept back and thrust out of the way; however, we have the satisfaction of knowing that we have succeeded admirably in organising this Contingent.* . . . I have seldom seen men who move better, and are more easily handled in the field; at ball practice they are first rate. During the winter, when we were several times threatened, the fellows turned out in the highest possible spirits. Whether the force will be kept up remains to be seen. The French will be averse to it, as giving us so much more influence. The Sultan is anxious to

* One great secret of Neill's success in the organisation and management of his force was the firm adherence to a determination to have as officers "none but men fit for the work." "I have," he wrote in one of his letters, "got, no

doubt, into great disgrace by being too strict. Twelve officers have been obliged to leave my division. I went at high game, for one Brigadier-General, three Lieut.-Colonels, and three Majors were among those who went very soon."

1856. have British officers to organise his army, and the report is that they will be lent to him. I, of course, will stay if the Government and Company will allow it. It is a grand thing for me to have the rank and position, and if—as they all say it will be—confirmed, I may return to India for a short time, only to some high command. My object has been, in coming out here, to gain rank, and if I have been debarred getting it in front of the enemy it is no fault of mine.”

The Anglo-Turkish Contingent was broken up, and Colonel Neill returned to England. Then came a brief, happy period of home-life. The entries in his journal, short but regular, exhibit him in the full enjoyment of tranquil domestic pleasures. He resided with his wife and children in Scotland—sometimes paying visits with the former to his friends and neighbours; sometimes attending national gatherings; and when the shooting season commenced, going out with his gun—perhaps more for exercise than for sport. During this period he was in frequent correspondence with the official authorities on the trouble-business of General Beatson and the Bashi-Bazoukhs; but any annoyance that this might have occasioned him was more than compensated by the kindness of some of the Directors of the East India Company, who expressed their willingness to provide for his sons. Mr. Mangles gave him a cadetship for one of his boys, and Mr. Prinsep for another.

In England.

Early in November he went to London, visited the India House about his leave, and after a few busy days there set out with his wife on a round of visits to friends in the home counties. From Westerham, where they were the guests of Mrs. Neill's cousin, Mr. Warde, of Squerryes, they went to Reading, thence to Bath and Cheltenham. From the latter place he went to the neighbourhood of Neath in South Wales, where he spent a few pleasant days with some members of his wife's family, and on the 10th of December returned to town. After a few days, he left London with his family, by the North-Western Railway, *en route* for the North, parting from them at Warrington; and whilst they journeyed on to Carlisle, he struck off to Liverpool, thence to visit some friends in the Isle of Man, thence to Whitehaven by water,

and thence on to Carlisle to rejoin his circle at Swindridge. On Christmas-day he dined very happily, with all his family about him—"a happy family gathering," he wrote in his journal, "of every member of it. Can we ever expect to meet again on another Christmas-day?" Never. But there were still a few more happy weeks for him. January passed, and the first half of February, and he was still surrounded by his family. On the 16th of the latter month, the bitter hour of parting came; and Neill tore himself from all he loved. There was some necessary business to be done in London, and the steamer was to leave Southampton on the 20th. 1856—57.

The voyage to India was not an eventful one. Early on Sunday, the 29th of March, the steamer entered the Madras Roads. "Go to Mount-road Chapel with Gillilian" is the first record in his journal after his arrival; the next is, "Find that I can get off to Bushire soon." His regiment had gone to the Persian Gulf, where the British expedition under Sir James Outram was operating with successful vigour; and Neill was eager to join without a moment of unnecessary delay. He was vexed that he had not received an information at Galle that it would be better for him to stop there and proceed thence to Bombay. But on the 6th of April telegraphic intelligence arrived to the effect that the war was at an end. It was then well-nigh certain that the Madras Fusiliers would return to the Presidency. So this chance of service was gone. Another week, and there is the first mention in his journal of "the bad feeling in the Bengal Army." Then on the 20th of April, "The Fusilier vessels signalled this morning." It was an exciting moment for him; for he was to take command of the regiment on its arrival, as the senior officer was compelled to proceed to England in broken health. "I find," he wrote in his journal, "that I shall have some work in hand to keep all square in the Fusiliers. I shall require to exercise great discretion, keep my own counsel, always act honestly, fairly, and for the good of the Service only, and all will be right. Go down to beach and see Fusiliers land—a very fine healthy body of men, fully equal to any regiment I have ever seen." On the 28th, Colonel Ste- In command. 1857.

1857. venson made over to him the command of the regiment ; and he began his business with all earnestness at once.

And so he went on, for a fortnight, taking the utmost pains to explain to all the officers under him the system upon which he intended to proceed ; wisely counselling the younger officers, and in one especial instance, in which he more than suspected a dangerous addiction to strong drink, endeavouring to reclaim the offender by inviting him to live with him in the same house. By kindness, blended with the firmest resolution, in all his dealings both with officers and men, he was rapidly gaining an ascendancy over the regiment, when news came from Calcutta that Northern India was in a blaze. Colonel Neill had just made his arrangements for a permanent residence in Madras, when he was summoned to proceed immediately to Bengal. "Receive from Spurgin," he wrote in his journal, under date May 16, "accounts that he has secured me a house. At eleven P.M. receive orders from Adjutant-General to hold the regiment in readiness to embark, fully equipped—for service. Warn regimental staff and heads of companies to set to work early in the morning. Hear that a telegraph is in from Calcutta, giving bad accounts from Meerut and Delhi, that our Bengal Native Army is in a state of mutiny." The opportunity, so long and patiently waited for, had come at last.

And Neill knew that it had come. There was something within him which told him clearly and distinctly, beyond the reach of all inward questionings and misgivings, that much was demanded of him, and that he was equal to the occasion. He was so sure of this, that he did not hesitate to express his conviction that no responsibility could descend upon him, however heavy, the burden of which he was not capable of bearing ; and this not boastfully, but with a quiet, assured feeling of self-reliance, and something of a prophetic insight into the future. "He was sitting with me," writes a friend, "in my little office room shortly before he left for Bengal, talking over sundry professional matters, when he incidentally, and as it were half meditatively, remarked on the great service his Crimean experience had been to him professionally. He said, 'It has been the making of me, for I now feel fully equal to any extent of professional employment or responsi-

1857.

bility which can ever devolve on me.' Thinking the speech savoured somewhat of self-esteem, I looked up inquiringly at him, but was speedily convinced that nothing was further from his thoughts than boasting. His expression was calm and thoughtful, and his eyes fixed, as if peering into that future which was so soon to verify the justice and sincerity of his estimate of his own character. I never saw him again to speak to, but I never forgot the deep impression his words made on me, strengthened as it subsequently was by his too short but brilliant career in Bengal—not too short for his own fame and his country's good."

"We embarked in excellent order," wrote Neill from Calcutta at the end of May, "early on the morning of the 18th, and arrived here on the afternoon of the 23rd. . . . Our passage up was very favourable, until one of the boilers burst; but with no harm to any one, though it brought us down to half-speed at once. I landed soon, and saw the Military Secretary to Government and the Deputy-Quartermaster-General, and made all arrangements to start off the men I had brought up by steamers to Benares. However, next day there was a change. Only one hundred and thirty men went up the country by steamer, and the rest I am starting off by train."

But this was not accomplished without an incident, which soon proved to the people of Bengal that the Madras officer had the right stuff in him, and that he was eminently the man for the crisis. The story has been often told before. It shall be told here in his own words. "The terminus," he wrote, "is on the bank of the river, almost opposite the fort, at Howrah. There is a landing-place and jetty. The train was to start at 8.30 P.M. My men were all on board flats in the river, where they were cool and comfortable, and out of the way of mischief. When a party of one hundred men were intended to go by train, the flat on which they were was hauled into the jetty. On the night on which the second party left, the flat was hauled in, but there was a squall, and consequent delay. The railway people on shore gave no assistance. As we neared the jetty, a jack-in-office station-master called out to me very insolently that I was late, and that the train would not wait for me a moment. He would

May.
Calcutta.

1857. send it off without me. A little altercation ensued. Our men were landed by their officers, and went, making the best of their way up to the carriages. The fellow was still insolent, and threatened to start the train; so I put him under charge of a sergeant's guard, with orders not to allow him to move, until I gave permission. The other officials were equally threatening and impertinent. One gentleman told me that I might command a regiment, but that I did not command them; they had authority there, and that he would start the train without my men. I then placed a guard over the engineer and stoker, got all my men safely into the train, and then released the railway people. Off went the train—only ten minutes after time. . . . I told the gentlemen that their conduct was that of traitors and rebels, and fortunate it was for them that *I* had not to deal with them. The matter has been brought to the notice of Government. I have heard nothing more than that Lord Canning thinks I did what was right; and the railway people are now most painfully civil and polite. It is given out that there was never an instance known of the railway officials being interfered with, far less made prisoners, except once in Ireland, in the Smith O'Brien affair, by Sir E. Blakeney."

June.
Benares.

Having started the whole of his regiment, Colonel Neill made all haste, by horse dawk, to Benares, which he reached on the 3rd of June. He found that some seventy men of his own regiment had arrived, and that in addition to these there were a hundred and twenty men of her Majesty's 10th Foot, and thirty European artillerymen, with three guns. The native force consisted of the 37th Sepoy Regiment, a regiment of Irregular Cavalry, and the Sikh regiment of Loodhianah. In all the country, perhaps, there was not a spot to which more anxious eyes were turned; for it was the very nursery and hotbed of Hindooism—the great home of the Brahmin priesthood. The British authorities were alive to the danger by which they were surrounded, but it seemed to them that the safest course was to appear not to suspect it. Even when news came of the mutiny of the 17th Regiment at Azimgurh, only some sixty miles distant, the Brigadier hesitated to disarm at once the 37th Regiment, whose fidelity, in this juncture, was doubtful. Against delay Neill vigorously protested; and

1857.
June.

succeeded in obtaining the consent of the Brigadier to an immediate afternoon parade.* Soon after five o'clock the European troops were assembled. Colonel Neill was not the senior officer present on that parade; but he was soon compelled to take the command. The senior officer was Brigadier Ponsonby, who, sixteen or seventeen years before, as a Captain of Native Cavalry, had covered himself with glory on the field of Purwan-durrah, when his regiment turned their backs on the Afghan horsemen, in their last charge, under Dost Mahomed.† His health had for some time been failing, and now the slant rays of the fierce June sun took terrible effect upon him, and he was struck down by *coup de soleil*.

It was intended to surprise the suspected regiment in their lines, and compel them to give up their arms. "We were," wrote Neill in a private letter, "to have been joined by the Sikhs and cavalry, on the parade-ground of the 37th; but they were not up, so we pushed on. The 37th let us come close, keeping within their huts and places of arms, and fired a volley into us. There was some confusion at first. . . . I was nearly cut off, but got back again among my men, and got the lads into order. The Artillery fired grape, and the 37th were nearly silenced. Colonel Gordon had brought his Sikhs up; the guns were in the centre, our men protecting them; the 10th Foot on their right; the Sikhs on their left. I had arranged to clear the Sepoys' lines, that is, to drive

* The story is thus told in an official narrative drawn up by Mr. Taylor, joint-magistrate of Jaunpoor: "None could now doubt that a crisis was near at hand; and on June 4th, a council (both civil and military) was called to debate the question of disarming the 37th Native Infantry. It was still sitting when a Sowar arrived with the news of the mutiny at Azungurh. This decided the question, and it was arranged that next morning the civilians should assemble at the Collector's kutchery, whilst the 37th was paraded and disarmed. The debate had been very full, and the decision deliberate: yet the civilians had scarce reached their homes when they were alarmed by the roar of the guns on the parade-ground. The whole plans were in vain. They had been frustrated by the following cir-

cumstances. It appears that as Brigadier Ponsonby was returning home after the council, he met Colonel Neill, who recommended him to disarm the corps at once. Disregarding all other considerations, on the spur of the moment he hurried to the parade-ground; the troops turned out, &c." But I have a copy of a letter from Brigadier Ponsonby, in which it is stated that the recommendation in favour of immediate action came from Colonel Gordon. "It then transpired," he wrote, that the men of the 37th were much implicated, and Gordon advised that the regiment should be disarmed at once. After some discussion, I agreed. We had no time (it being between four and five P.M.) to lose, and but little arrangement could be made."

† See *ante*, Memoir of Sir A. Burnes, page 55-56, vol. ii.

1857.
June.

them out, and follow them up to prevent mischief to the unprotected in the cantonment. I was just doing so, and had got my men into the Sepoys' huts, when there was an alarm about the guns. I was out of sight of them at the moment, but hastened towards them to see the Sikhs firing on our three guns, and our small protecting party of Fusiliers advancing to charge them. You may imagine my delight on seeing the Artillerymen bringing their guns to bear, and our lads firing steadily with effect. The Sikhs did not stand two rounds of grape, but broke and fled. . . . I continued the fight until all had fled, followed them up as far as I could, fired round-shot into them, and set fire to their lines. The consequence is, that not a woman or a child has been touched."*

Having made all possible provision for the safety of the women and children and the general security of the place, Colonel Neill turned his thoughts, with anxious forebodings of evil, towards Allahabad, which lay some eighty miles in advance—an important civil and military station, situated at the confluence of the Jumna and the Ganges, and often described as the "key of the lower provinces" of Hindostan. Beyond a few men attached to the general Staff, there were no European soldiers in the place. The temper of the native soldiery was doubtful. The Sixth regiment of Sepoys had volunteered, with apparent enthusiasm, to march against the insurgents at Delhi. On the afternoon of the 6th of June, the regiment was assembled to hear a letter of thanks from the Governor-General read to them on parade. "The men," says the official account of these transactions, "seemed highly

* It is generally believed that the Sikh regiment had no foregone intention to mutiny. Mistaking the designs of the British officers, they fell into a panic, and the strong instinct of self-preservation urged them to fire, in self-defence, on their supposed enemies. The narrative already quoted says: "The 37th was ordered to pile arms, and replied with a volley, to which the guns gave a speedy and efficient answer; but at this unhappy moment, Captain Olpherts, perceiving a movement among the Sikhs on his right, promptly turned the guns, and opened fire upon them. For some minutes the event was doubtful; thrice the rebels charged the guns,

thrice were driven back with grape; the guns continued their destructive play; the mutineers wavered, and then broke and fled. Never was route so complete; a thousand armed men were flying from two hundred." Further on the same narrative says: "The Sikhs were brought out not knowing what was to be done; suddenly the guns on one side opened on the 37th, men, officers, and all; and on the other side the Irregular Cavalry began forcing into and abusing the Sikhs; then a bad character stepped forward and tried to shoot Colonel Gordon. The corps then mutinied; first fired into a group of young officers, and then charged the guns."

1857.
June.

pleased, and cheered loudly. The European officers were more than confirmed in their implicit reliance on the fidelity of their men; yet in three hours and a half this loyal cheer was changed for the shout of mutiny and murder." On that night they rose upon their officers. There was a large gathering at the mess-house; and among the diners a number of cadets, recently arrived from England, mere schoolboys in age and manners. The mutineers fell suddenly upon them, and massacred nearly the whole party. Next morning the gates of the great gaols were thrown open, and three thousand ruffians let loose to aid in the "work of blood and destruction." The fort still, however, remained in our hands; but it was threatened both from within and from without, for the fidelity of the Sikh troops was doubtful, and the mutineers outside were preparing to invest the place.

But it was saved by the foresight and promptitude of Neill. Whilst yet the accounts from Allahabad were that "all was well," he had despatched a party of fifty men of the Fusiliers under Lieutenant Arnold, with orders to proceed by forced marches to Allahabad. On the morning of the 7th of June they arrived, wearied and exhausted, at Jhoosee, where the road from Benares met a bridge of boats, by which the river was crossed to Allahabad. The bridge was in the hands of the enemy; but there was a steamer off the fort, which, after some unaccountable delay, was sent to bring in the Fusiliers. On the 9th another detachment, which Neill had sent forward, made its timely appearance; and on the 11th, Neill himself, having made over the command of Benares to Colonel Gordon, appeared, with further reinforcements, under the walls of Allahabad.

The energetic measures of Neill soon completed the work. His first step was to recover the bridge of boats, and to secure a safe passage for another party of the Fusiliers, which was pressing forward under Major Stephenson. This was on the 12th of June, the day after his arrival. On the 13th he swept the enemy out of the adjacent villages, where they were clustering in strength; and on the following day, a further body of Fusiliers having arrived, the Sikh corps was removed from the fort, and with it all remaining danger. "At Allahabad," wrote Lord Canning to the chairman of the East India Com-

1857.
June.

pany, "the 6th Regiment has mutinied, and fearful atrocities were committed by the people on Europeans outside the fort. But the fort has been saved. Colonel Neill, with nearly three hundred European Fusiliers, is established in it; and that point, the most precious in India at this moment, and for many years the one most neglected, is safe, thank God! A column," added the Governor-General, "will collect there (with all the speed which the means of conveyance will allow of), which Brigadier Havelock, just returned from Persia, will command."

Of these events, Neill himself wrote, on the 21st of June, to a friend, saying: "I have time to write you a few lines. As you may have heard, I have not been idle here. I have had it much my own way, that is, had the opportunity of doing all I thought best for the public service and the emergency, and have been most wonderfully successful. Thanks be to God for having upheld me in all, and never allowing me to be at a loss in many of the emergencies that have occurred. I have never asked advice; I have always acted on my own responsibility, duly considered everything, given my orders, and had no changes after I assumed command. At Benares, I was astonished at many of the civilians and others, after I had taken post for the night, peeping about and asking where the council of war was to be held, to decide what was to be done. I soon put a stop to *that nonsense*. I never allowed councils of war, would give my orders as to what was to be done, and desired no advice to be attempted to be given. I decided as to the choice of our position, and was particular in everything. I lost no time in posting on fifty men—all I could spare—under that gallant young officer, Arnold. They left by horse-dawk the night of the 5th (the night of the mutiny), they got in early next morning, and saved this in time. I pressed on as many as I could, followed myself with forty men—nearly cut off—took two days' hard work to do what was done in a night, got in in the forenoon, found Simpson besieged, had to make my way in by getting a boat by stealth from the rebel side; got my men in. Fancy my walking, at least one mile, through burning river sand; it nearly killed me. I only lived by having water dashed over me. When I got into the open boat, my umbrella was my only covering:

1857.
June.

two of our lads died of sunstroke in the boat: that I escaped is one of the greatest mercies. I found all wrong here: the Europeans almost cheered me when I came in. The salute of the sentries at the gate was, 'Thank God, sir, you'll save us yet!' I set to work, and thrashed the fellows from about the place; the heat was terrific. I could only send my troops, for I could not accompany them, though much required; but I sat more dead than alive in a choultry, where I could see and direct. God prospered us, and after four days the fellows took alarm.* I had taken advantage of a steamer coming in, and sent a party with a gun in her up the Jumna, to attack it at all points: these completed it: the fellows sustained great loss, several of the leaders slain, they took panic one night and fled, and left behind them the two guns they had taken from Colonel Simpson the night of the mutiny. Cholera then suddenly attacked us, and the result was fearful; it has now left us but about one hundred cases and fifty odd deaths in a few hours and less than three days. The Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief give me too much praise; it belongs to the fine fellows I have had to do the work for me. We are getting in. I am collecting guns for a large force from here, and will have all ready soon. I am equipping a small force to push into Cawnpore, but it is difficult with no carriage to send on a force alone, on a road assailed by the enemy; but I shall do it. I have done my best to relieve Sir Hugh Wheeler at Cawnpore, but could do no more; God help him! I feel assured he will hold on, for his has been a gallant defence; but how deplorable all to be taken in such a want of preparation, and to the last with so much *blind confidence* in the Sepoys."

In another letter, written to his wife, he dwelt still more forcibly upon what he endured at this time. Only the strong resolute will sustained him, under a burden of suffering, which would have pressed down and utterly incapacitated a weaker man. "I was quite done up," he said, "by my dash from Benares, and getting into the fort, in that noonday heat. I was so exhausted for days, that I was obliged to lie down constantly. I could only sit up for a few minutes at a time, and

* A detailed account of these operations, as given in Colonel Neill's official despatches, will be found in the Appendix.

1857.
June.

when our attacks were going on, I was obliged to sit down in the batteries and give my orders and directions. I had always the greatest confidence in myself, and although I felt almost dying from complete exhaustion, yet I kept up heart, and here I am, God be praised, as well as ever, only a little thinner. For several days I drank champagne and water to keep me up."

On the morning of the last day of June, Havelock reached Allahabad, and breakfasted with Neill. They had much to say to each other—much of the past, much of the future. During the latter fortnight of the month that terrible visitation of Providence—the "pestilence which walketh in the darkness," of which Neill wrote in the letter above quoted, had assailed the Europeans in the fort. Still, ever mindful of his peril-surrounded countrymen higher up the country, he had made arrangements to detach a large portion of his force to Cawnpore, and appointed his second in command, one altogether worthy of the post—Major Renaud—to lead it to the relief of Sir Hugh Wheeler. The instructions which Neill had prepared for the guidance of Renaud were now read, and highly approved by the General. Every point had been carefully considered; and he was not one to cast upon a junior officer any responsibility that he could take to himself. I give them here, as transcribed from a rough and not very legible copy :

Instructions to Major Renaud, commanding Cawnpore column of two hundred H.M.'s 84th, two hundred 1st Madras Fusiliers, two 9-pounder guns, with European gunners, three hundred Sikhs, and the Irregular Cavalry.

"1st. You are to march as quickly as you can, the great object being to relieve Sir H. Wheeler and Cawnpore.

"2nd. March off always early, and expose Europeans as little as possible; select shady places near good water for encampment.

"3rd. Attack and destroy all places *en route* close to the road occupied by the enemy, but touch no others; encourage the inhabitants to return, and instil confidence into all of the restoration of British authority. Let all know that two more regiments are to leave this soon, and will be up here by the

1857.
July.

end of the week, also that Delhi has been taken, &c.* and everything make known that will raise the British name—all this in contradiction to the lying reports to our disadvantage. The villages of Mubgoon and neighbourhood to be attacked and destroyed; slaughter all the men; take no prisoners.

“4th. All Sepoys found, without papers, from regiments that have mutinied, who cannot give good accounts of themselves, to be hanged forthwith, particularly those who plundered treasuries and murdered their officers; also all the Sepoys of the 6th and 37th Regiments not on passport.

“5th. A company of Sikhs to be left behind at the terminus of the railway on the Cawnpore side, commanded by an European officer, there to remain to keep up communication, and take charge of a depôt of provisions to be there formed. Futtehpore to be promptly attacked, the Patan quarters to be destroyed, all in it killed; in fact, make a signal example of this place. But don't let that detain you, as what you can't finish Brigadier Havelock will do. Two hundred Sikhs to be left there, with European officers. All officers belonging to the Oude Service, and whose regiments are in advance, to go on as far as Cawnpore.

“6th. You have some with you who know Cawnpore; from them find out the shortest road to Sir H. Wheeler's position, and all about the place.

“7th. In all attacks on villages, either use artillery to knock over any defence; or, better still, the powder-bags with sappers; surround villages with infantry to cut off fugitives; attack always at two points. At Futtehpore shell them with shrapnel. The cavalry should cut up fugitives; see how they act, if not zealously, let me know. The object in attacking villages and Futtehpore is to execute vengeance, and let it be amply taken. All heads of insurgents, particularly at Futtehpore, to be hanged. If the Deputy Collector is taken, hang him, and have his head cut off and stuck up on one of the principal buildings (Mahomedan) in the town. Spare your ammunition as much as possible; always keep your guns in the centre of your Europeans, or entirely with them; never allow the Sikhs, or any natives, to get on the flank next to them.

* False tidings to this effect had been circulated.

1857.
July.

“8th. Should Cawnpore unfortunately have fallen, attack the enemy, and hold your own until Brigadier Havelock joins you. All Government tents and property push on the road to be secured; the civil power will assist you in this.”

But as Renaud's force was to proceed by land, and it was of the utmost importance to communicate with Sir Hugh Wheeler with the least possible loss of time, a detachment of a hundred men with two guns was placed on board a river steamer, under Captain Spurgin, and despatched up the Ganges, with the following orders:

Instructions from Colonel Neill to Captain Spurgin, in command of a detachment proceeding on steamer to Cawnpore.

Allahabad, July 2, 1857.

“You are to push up as quickly as you can to Cawnpore; the object is to relieve Sir H. Wheeler. Land nowhere, but if mutiny and any opposition is shown, open fire, and destroy as many rebels as you can. On getting to Cawnpore, to the Ghaut nearest the entrenched camp best adapted for landing; communicate with Sir Hugh Wheeler; give him all the news of Renaud's columns, which will be at Cawnpore on the 8th. Land your men and stores as Sir H. Wheeler may direct, and I hope the steamer will be made available by Sir Hugh to bring down here all the ladies and children, also sick and wounded officers; the veteran artillerymen on board will be a guard down the river, and will be with the two guns sent back here. Should Cawnpore have fallen, endeavour to communicate with Major Renaud. Let the steamer take up a good position in the river where your guns can best be used, and hold your own when it can be done. Steam up and attack enemy if within reach of you; be there to bring off any who may have escaped. General Havelock starts on Saturday morning, with nearly one thousand men and three guns. You must remain until you hear from him. Your detachment will join him, and you have with you Renaud's luggage. You will be required to assist the force in crossing the river. Any insurgents that fall into your hands hang them at once, and shoot all you can. 8th of July. Intelligence having been received last night that Cawnpore may have fallen, you are to proceed up the river with the greatest cau-

1857
July.

tion as you approach within forty miles of it, and be most vigilant in avoiding compromising yourself by getting within fire from guns. Move up with caution as far as you can; obtain all the information possible of the state of affairs at Cawnpore. Communicate with Major Renaud's column now at the railway, near which he will remain until General Havelock overtakes him. The united force will reach Futtehpore about the 8th. You must communicate with the General, or advance up the river at the same rate as he advances. You will thus secure the river on his right flank. Having obtained certain news of the state of affairs at Cawnpore, move up and relieve it if it still holds out; if it has fallen, either remain where you receive the intelligence, if a good place to remain, or drop quietly down near the infantry column, to a secure position, and wait until the advance of the force."

But these instructions had been scarcely signed when intelligence was received which rendered it necessary that these carefully-prepared plans should be reconsidered. Some messengers arrived from Sir Henry Lawrence, at Lucknow, and they reported that they had passed through Cawnpore: that that terrible tragedy, which cannot even now be named without a shudder, had been acted, and that our miserable people there had passed beyond the reach of all human help. Havelock accepted these facts, but Neill was at first disposed to disbelieve them; and he chafed a little when he found that the General and his Staff talked of halting Renaud's force, and not sending up the steamer with Spurgin's detachment. The steamer, however, was allowed to start on the following day, and Neill, still incredulous of the fall of Cawnpore, telegraphed to Government that he believed the story was an invention of the Nana Sahib, intended to mislead us; and although further accounts to the same effect were received, he continued to misbelieve the story, and strenuously urged the advance of Renaud's force, at however slow a rate, in order that there might be no appearance of vacillation and uncertainty upon our part. The cry of "Forward!" was ever on his lips. He was angered when others talked of "halting."

Meanwhile Havelock had been making his preparations to push on with reinforcements, to overtake Renaud's force, and

1857.
July

to advance to the relief of Cawnpore. But at the very commencement of the mutiny and rebellion at Allahabad, the Commissariat bullocks had been carried off or let loose by the insurgents; and the means of conveyance for Havelock's force could not, therefore, be brought together with the promptitude desired. He moved, however, on the 7th of July, and was soon on the road to victory.

"Lieutenant-Colonel Neill," wrote the General to the Commander-in-Chief, "whose high qualities I cannot sufficiently praise, will follow with another column as soon as it can be organised, and this fort left in proper hands. I should have preferred to move the whole of the troops together, but the relief of Lucknow is an affair of time, and I cannot hazard its fall by waiting for the organisation of Neill's column."* So Neill, eager to push on, but recognising the necessity of his detention, remained behind at Allahabad. He now became painfully convinced against his will that our unhappy people at Cawnpore had been ruthlessly murdered—men, women, and children, foully butchered in cold blood by the detestable Nana of Bhitoor. The details of this sickening tragedy made a deep and abiding impression on his mind. A stern resolution to take terrible vengeance on the murderers took possession of him, and it became the one great desire of his heart that he might live to inflict righteous retribution upon those who had massacred our helpless little ones. He thought of his own wife and children, then happily safe in England; and he wrote in his journal: "I can never spare a Sepoy again. All that fall into my hands will be dead men." There was something of the old Scotch Covenanter spirit within him, and he felt that it was God's will that he should not spare.

Cawnpore.

On the 16th of July, having been pressed by the Commander-in-Chief to join Havelock as speedily as possible, Neill made over the command of Allahabad, and pushed on by horse-dawk for Cawnpore. Before he started, he had received news of the successful actions which Havelock had fought with the enemy, and forwarded the glad tidings to the

* Marshman's Life of Havelock.

Government at Calcutta. "On the 15th of July," he wrote to a friend, "I received a telegram from the Chief praising General Havelock for his victories at Futtehpore, &c., which I was requested to communicate to him. With this came also the following: 'But his health is not strong, and the season is very trying; it is urgently necessary, therefore, that provision should be made for placing the command of the column in tried hands of known and assured efficiency, in whom perfect confidence can be placed, in case Havelock should become from any cause unfit for duty. You have been selected for the post, and accordingly you will proceed with every practicable expedition to join Havelock, making over the command of Allahabad to the next senior officer.'*" This I received in the afternoon. I was sending off that evening a strong detachment of her Majesty's 34th per bullock van, twenty-five miles a night. I determined to remain that night, and start off by horse-dawk and overtake them. I sent off my traps with them. I had much to do at Allahabad, instructions to give, &c. The senior officer was a Captain of the 78th. My successor, Colonel O'Brien, was expected on the 15th; he did not come, and I got away, overtook the detachment head-quarters of the corps, and got to Cawnpore in five days. I had hardly seen General Havelock before he said to me: 'Now, General Neill, let us understand each other; you have no power or authority here whilst I am here, and you are not to issue a single order.' He used to go down to the Ghât every day to superintend the crossing over of the troops and material. . . . I was placed in command at Cawnpore on his quitting. Well, off he went at last, and I assumed command."

1857.
July.

One of Neill's first acts was to inquire into the circumstances of the ghastly tragedy of Cawnpore. The ascertained truth exceeded in horror all that his worst fears had suggested. He was a tender-hearted, impressionable man, whom such a

* Before making over the command, Neill drew up a most elaborate paper of instructions for the guidance of his successor, the length of which alone precludes its insertion here. It is especially worthy of notice, however, as clearly demonstrating that those who said that Neill was remarkable mainly for an im-

petuous daring, which commonly disregarded all consideration of strategical cautions, were especially wrong. The paper of Instructions to Renaud and Spurgin, given in the text, go far to disprove this. The instructions to his successor at Allahabad render the proof conclusive.

1857.
July.

story as this was sure to fill with measureless compassion on the one side, and indignation on the other. The horrors of Cawnpore might be repeated at Lucknow. When he thought of this—that even then, in our beleaguered position, delicate women and innocent children were every day becoming more and more at the mercy of our remorseless enemies—there was a great conflict within him, and he asked himself, in doubt and perplexity, what was to be done. He was not one of those who would have executed indiscriminate vengeance on the nation which had sent forth these cruel and cowardly assassins. A black face was not an abomination in his eyes. He had, throughout the whole of his march, regarded scrupulously the rights and interests of the innocent people. He had suppressed with a strong hand every impulse to pillage and plunder. He had never suffered his men to take anything in the way of carriage or provisions from the people which was not paid for to the last farthing. He had hanged many murderers and mutineers, but never without trial, and what seemed to him to be full evidence of their guilt.* Nor, even with all the heart-breaking manifestations of that foul massacre at Cawnpore before him, did a thought of sweeping and confounding vengeance ever take possession of him. But he was eager to inflict upon the miscreants themselves what he felt would be, both for our own people and our enemies, a just and merciful retribution. What he thought and what he did, at that time, shall be told in his own words, as recorded in a letter to a friend.

Having recited at some length the terrible story of the massacre in the boats at Futtehgur, he proceeded to say, “The men were shot, the women and children were brought up to a little bungalow near the Assembly-rooms. The Futtehgur fugitives, such as were saved, were brought in there too. I have sent a list of all, and their fate. Upwards of two hundred women and children were brought into that house; many had been killed in the boats, many killed and died in the entrenchment; all who survived fever, dysentery, and

* In a private letter, which was published some time ago in a Scotch paper, Neill distinctly said: “Whenever a rebel is caught, he is immediately tried, and, unless he can prove a defence, he is sentenced to be hanged at once.” As a different statement has been made, it is important to consider this.

1857.
July.

cholera, in the confinement in that house, were barbarously murdered, after the receipt of the intelligence of Havelock's first victory—this by the Nana's order. They were badly fed and treated at first, but afterwards got more and clean clothing, and servants to wait on them. They were sent their evening meal on that fatal day, and after it these fiends rushed in and butchered them all; they were shot and hacked to pieces. The bodies of all who died there were thrown into the well of the house, all the murdered also. I saw that house when I first came in. Ladies' and children's bloody torn dresses and shoes were lying about, and locks of hair torn from their heads. The floor of the one room they were all dragged into and killed was saturated with blood. One cannot control one's feelings. Who could be merciful to one concerned? Severity at the first is mercy in the end. I wish to show the natives of India that the punishment inflicted by us for such deeds will be the heaviest, the most revolting to their feelings, and what they must ever remember.* I issued the following order, which, however objectionable in the estimation of some of our Brahminised infatuated elderly gentlemen, I think suited to the occasion, or rather to the present crisis: '25th July, 1857. The well in which are the remains of the poor women and children so brutally murdered by this miscreant, the Nana, will be filled up, and neatly and decently covered over to form their grave: a party of European soldiers will do so this evening, under the superintendence of an officer. The house in which they were butchered, and which is stained with their blood, will not be washed or cleaned by their countrymen; but Brigadier-General Neill has determined that every stain of that innocent blood shall be cleared up and wiped out, previous to their execution, by such of the miscreants as may be hereafter apprehended, who took an active part in the mutiny, to be selected according to their rank, caste, and degree of guilt. Each miscreant, after sentence of death is pronounced upon him, will be taken down to the house in question, under a guard, and will be forced into cleaning up a small portion of

* In another letter, Neill says: "My object is to inflict a fearful punishment for a revolting, cowardly, barbarous deed, and to strike terror into these rebels. . . . No one who has witnessed the scenes of murder, mutilation, and massacre, can ever listen to the word 'mercy' as applied to these fiends."

1857.
July.

the blood-stains; the task will be made as revolting to his feelings as possible, and the Provost-Marshal will use the lash in forcing any one objecting to complete his task. After properly cleaning up his portion the culprit is to be immediately hanged, and for this purpose a gallows will be erected close at hand.'—The first culprit was a Soubahdar of the 6th Native Infantry, a fat brute, a very high Brahmin. The sweeper's brush was put into his hands by a sweeper, and he was ordered to set to work. He had about half a square foot to clean; he made some objection, when down came the lash, and he yelled again; he wiped it all up clean, and was then hung, and his remains buried in the public road. Some days after, others were brought in—one a Mahomedan officer of our civil court, a great rascal, and one of the leading men: he rather objected, was flogged, made to lick part of the blood with his tongue. No doubt this is strange law, but it suits the occasion well, and I hope I shall not be interfered with, until the room is thoroughly cleansed in this way. . . . I will hold my own, with the blessing and help of God. I cannot help seeing that His finger is in all this—we have been false to ourselves so often. . . . Charlie, my boy, I expect out the first mail. I have applied for him to come up here to do duty, and I hope to belong to the "Lambs," or as the Nana and the enemy call them, the Neel-topee-wallahs. They wear light blue cap covers; the enemy say those fellows' muskets kill at a mile off before they are fired: so much for Enfields. Your account of —— is what I expected. He has nothing in him; he is very timid. These panics are bad. I would turn every man in the service, civil or military, out of it, whose nerves failed him. Men of this stamp have no business in India."

It was, doubtless, a terrible sentence that he executed, in the eyes of the people of India; but he was fully convinced, in his own mind, that only by such severity could he check the atrocities which, in their blind fury, the rebels and mutineers were committing upon the Christian people. Those upon whom the punishment fell, and their own countrymen who looked on, believed that the terrors of the sentence would pursue them beyond the grave; but this, in the eyes of a Christian, was only an idea which added further bitterness to the cup of death upon this side of eternity. There were

1857.
July.

many humane men at that time who believed that real mercy required the judge to do violence to his own tenderness of heart. On such questions as this there must be much controversy and contention; for neither the law of God nor the judgment of man has clearly declared the extent to which, in exceptional conjunctures, the ordinary principles of justice and morality may rightly be disregarded. But if such acts as these be offences, they are offences which History is seldom unwilling to condone.

But I gladly turn from this painful episode, to write of Neill's other more congenial duties. He was left, with some three hundred men, at Cawnpore, whilst Havelock was endeavouring to penetrate Oude and to advance to the relief of Lucknow. What was the principal work to be done by him may be gathered from the instructions which he received on the 26th of July. He was ordered "to endeavour to defend as much of the trunk-road as is now in British possession in Cawnpore, and to aid in maintaining the communications with Allahabad and with the Brigadier-General's (Havelock's) forces in Oude." In addition to discharging all the routine details of duty, and effecting the establishment of order in the town and cantonments of Cawnpore, he was directed "to construct and strengthen entrenchments on both banks of the river, and to mount heavy guns in them; to render the passage of the river secure and easy by establishing, in co-operation with the two steamers, a boat-communication from entrenchment to entrenchment;" and with this view he was to organise a well-paid corps of boatmen, and to collect and keep together a fleet of boats. He was to watch the roads to Allahabad, Allyghur, Delhi, and Agra, and to push forward reinforcements into Oude. Finally, the Brigadier-General desired that Neill should communicate with him "in the most unreserved manner." All these several duties, the last not least, were strictly performed.

On the 20th of July, Havelock had commenced the passage of the river, which was the first step towards his advance into Oude. After a week of labour and difficulty, the whole column was assembled on the Oude bank. "Some of the General's Staff," says Havelock's biographer, Mr. Marshman, "were anxious that General Neill should accom-

1857.
July.

pany the column to replace him, if he were disabled by any casualty; but the General, after carefully weighing the importance of the position at Cawnpore, the necessity of receiving, equipping, and forwarding reinforcements, and completing the establishment of a communication between the two banks of the river, and generally of maintaining our authority on the right bank of the Ganges, felt himself constrained to leave General Neill in charge of the entrenchments, with the sick and wounded, there being no other officer to whom he could entrust these responsibilities with equal confidence." On the morning of the 29th the force advanced upon the town of Onao, where Havelock encountered a large body of the enemy, and routed them with heavy loss. After this he advanced to Busseerutgunje, where he gained another victory; then halted in his career of glory and fell back upon Mungulwar, the place in which he had assembled his troops for the advance, only six miles distant from the banks of the river. "As you know," wrote Neill, "the first march brought him in contact with the enemy; he had one day's hard fighting on the 29th, beat him completely; we lost a number of men from some little mistake in the first affair, getting boxed round a loopholed keep or serraie, which was obstinately defended: here Richardson of 'ours' fell, Seton and others wounded, but take the whole day's work the loss was not much; nineteen guns were taken in all, but three ordered to be brought up and secured by the Sikhs were left behind and taken away by the enemy; this left sixteen fine brass guns, most of them ours—one a brass 24-pounder. However, all of these we destroyed by the General's order. The enemy were flying—the bridge they were so anxious about was ten or twelve miles off, our men in high spirits, blood up, &c.; this was the time; but suddenly, on being ordered to fall in to march, instead of an advance it was a retreat." On the 31st of July, writing to Neill from Mungulwar, Havelock said: "I have come back here, because, though everywhere successful, I urgently require another battery and a thousand more British troops to enable me to do anything for the real advantage of Lucknow. . . . I shall be thankful for the aid of your exertions in obtaining as many workmen as possible for Captain Crommelin to commence

and finish a bridge-head on this bank. Pray, also, urge on the collection of rations for my troops. Two heavy guns, 24-pounders, must be got ready, with bullocks, to accompany my advance, and three large iron guns kept in readiness for the tête-de-pont. Push across any British infantry as soon as it arrives, and improve as much as possible our boat-communication. I propose to advance again as soon as the reinforcements reach me, and to urge the garrison of Lucknow to hold out."

1857.

It would be out of place in such a narrative as this to discuss at length the strategical considerations which induced General Havelock to make this retrograde movement. Right or wrong, it created bitter disappointment in Cawnpore. To Neill, burning as he was with an eager desire for the immediate relief of Lucknow, and who, with such an object ever before his eyes, believed that all difficulties should have been overcome, and all ordinary rules of war disregarded, this retrogression, in the hour of victory, appeared to be so startling and unintelligible, that he chafed under his mortification, and could not restrain himself from writing a letter of remonstrance to his superior officer. "My dear General," he wrote on the 1st of August, "I late last night received yours of five P.M. yesterday. I deeply regret that you have fallen back one foot. The effect on our prestige is very bad indeed. Your camp was not pitched yesterday, before all manners of reports were rife in the city—that you had returned to get some guns, having lost all that you took away with you. In fact, the belief among all is, that you have been defeated and forced back. It has been most unfortunate your not bringing back any of the guns captured from the enemy. The natives will not believe that you have captured one. The effect of your retrograde movement will be very injurious to our cause everywhere, and bring down upon us many who would otherwise have held off, or even sided with us. . . . You talk of advancing as soon as the reinforcements reach you. You require a battery and a thousand European infantry. As regards the battery, half of Olpherts's will be in this morning. The other half started yesterday or to-day from Allahabad. This will detain you five or six days more. As for the infantry you require, they are not to be had, and if you are to

1857

wait for them, Lucknow will follow the fate of Cawnpore. Agra will be invested. This place also. The city will be occupied by the enemy. I have no troops to keep them out, and *we* shall be starved out. You ought not to remain a day where you are. When the iron guns are sent to you, also the half battery of artillery, and the company of the 84th escorting it, you ought to advance again, and not halt until you have rescued, if possible, the garrison of Lucknow." Looking at it strictly in a military point of view, the reader will doubtless say that this letter ought not to have been written. Discipline stands aghast at it. No junior officer has the privilege of thus criticising the conduct of his senior. An apology, however, is to be found in the extraordinary character of the times, and the magnitude of the interests at stake. It was an unexampled crisis, and one in which the best men were moved at times to disregard all considerations of rank and station, and to assume an independence of tone which at other times would have been an unwarrantable breach of duty. There were, indeed, moments, in that terrible autumn of 1857, when, under the strongest sense of what was due to the nation they represented, moved by the irresistible manhood within them, men were prepared to trample down all the laws of discipline, and to assert irresistibly the rights of the stronger will and the more resolute courage. The words and actions of men, in such a crisis as this, must not be estimated by the measuring-rod of the army-list and the order-book. Neill thought, on that August morning, of the despairing cries of the beleaguered garrison of Lucknow, and of the safety of the Great Empire, which was then threatened as it had never before been threatened; and he forgot for a while that it was the duty of Brigadier-General Neill not to remonstrate against the measures of Major-General Havelock, but to accept them in silence as those of superior military authority.

But it was to this masculine energy of mind—to this irresistible activity of body—to the voice within him, which was ever crying, "Forward, forward!" that England owed at that time the safety of the great cities of Benares and Allahabad. If he had been a man of a colder and less eager nature—if he had had more caution and more patience, he

1857.

would not have earned for himself the place that he has earned in the hearts of the people. Let us forget, then, the question of discipline for a time. Havelock responded* and Neill sent in a rejoinder, which the highest military authority in India declared to be "perfectly unexceptionable;" and, a day or two afterwards, the General again pushed forward in advance. But, again, there was disappointment throughout the force, throughout the whole country, for Havelock, assured that he could not make good his advance to Lucknow, fell back, after more successes in the field, and waited for reinforcements. Of the necessity for this Neill himself was after a time convinced. "Call on General Havelock," he wrote in his journal on the 14th of August, "and show him telegram from the Commander-in-Chief, and give him my opinion, that his men are not in a state to advance on Lucknow—that they must be taken care of for a time, and saved all unnecessary exposure. . . . General Havelock talks a great deal about my administrative powers, wishing to take me with him out fighting, and participating in his victories. I reply to this, that however much I may feel at not having participated in them, and however anxious I may be to be in front, all private feelings should be sacrificed at such a time as this, and that I wished to be employed where I could do most for the public good. Besides, what I did not tell General Havelock, there is a farce in two Generals being with a handful of men, and one of them allowed to do nothing."

Whilst Havelock was making these ineffectual attempts to penetrate Oude, Neill was threatened at Cawnpore by large bodies of insurgent Sepoys, conspicuous among whom were the 42nd Regiment, that had recently mutinied at Saugor. The adherents of the Nana, at Bithoor, were also menacing

Cawnpore
threatened.

* "I got a terrific reply," wrote Neill, in a letter to a friend. "General H. said my note was one of the most extraordinary that he had ever perused, that he had written to me confidentially on the state of affairs: 'You send me back a letter of censure of my measures, reproof, and advice for the future. I do not want, and will not submit, to receive any of these from an officer under my command, be his experience what it

may; understand this distinctly; and a consideration of the inconvenience that would arise to the public service at this moment alone prevents me from taking the yet stronger step of placing you under arrest. You now stand warned. Attempt no further dictation. I have my own reasons, which I will not communicate to any one, and am alone responsible for the course I have pursued.'"

1857.

his position, and with the little handful of men at his disposal he found it wholly impossible to strike an effectual blow at the enemy. He could only send out small detachments at a time. "About two thousand men," he wrote to a friend, "part of the 42nd, 41st, and the regiments here, with four guns, are at Bithoor, twelve miles from this; eight thousand men more, with some guns, are at Futtehghur, seven miles off; about fifteen hundred men are at Shevrapore, twenty-four miles off; and the Nana, with Jussin Singh and fifteen hundred, about the same distance on the other side of the river, close to Bithoor. They can cross the river any time, although I have thrice sent the steamers up with a lot of our lads and a few artillerymen, and have astonished them a little. The first day, on the first occasion, they destroyed boats, and brought down grain, not a soul to be seen except friends, the 42nd from Saugor coming thereabouts; and on hearing that some of the Nana's people had crossed over and had plundered those friendly to us there, I sent up the steamer and forty of our boys, twenty Sikhs, eight artillerymen, two 6-pounders and a 5-pounder inch mortar on board; and they polished off a parcel of Gungapoots, a religious class of vagabond Hindoo devotees who had joined the Nana and committed no end of atrocities: none of our lads were touched. On the 6th I sent up again the same force; each time my aide-de-camp commanded. We had three artillerymen wounded, but gave it to the fellows well; the 42nd and the Rifle Company the greater portion of the enemy. They had two guns. I cannot do more than this. On the 10th the enemy were approaching, and an attack in the city was apprehended. I could not assist them; I have only three hundred infantry, half a battery of European artillery, and twelve veteran gunners. I can only move out one hundred and seventy infantry and four guns, leaving the guards standing; and of the two hundred and thirty in hospital several are convalescent, and fit to stand behind a parapet and fire. With this *force* I moved out in the morning of the 10th towards Bithoor; the outpost of cavalry were about six miles off, and cavalry patrols were about. I saw or heard of no one until our scouts came in and reported the gallant enemy tailing off beyond Bithoor. The General has ordered me not to use steam again until he has passed over;

1857.

when he has, I should like to see a combined attack on them, and let us whenever we attack make an example; this gathering near this, and the Futtehghur man, must be destroyed sharp."

But upon the day following that which is last mentioned in this brief summary of events, the aspect of affairs became more threatening, and Neill wrote to Havelock, saying: "One of the Sikh scouts I can depend upon has just come in, and reports that four thousand men and five guns have assembled to-day at Bithoor, and threaten Cawnpore. I cannot stand this; they will enter the town, and our communications are gone. If I am not supported, I can only hold out here—can do nothing beyond our entrenchments. All the country between this and Allahabad will be up, and our powder and ammunition on the way up (if the steamer, as I feel assured, does not start) will fall into the hands of the enemy, and we shall be in a bad way." So Havelock, having struck another blow at the enemy at Boorhiya, returned, as before stated, and attacked the enemy at Bithoor on the 16th of August. The insurgents were dispersed, the victory was complete, and Havelock then posted himself in Cawnpore.

There the announcement greeted him that Sir James Outram had been appointed to the command in that part of the country, and that he was making his preparations to come on with reinforcements. It was now Havelock's part to hold his own at Cawnpore until the arrival of the General with his new regiments, and Neill then ceased to have any independent authority.* The following month is said by the military historians to have been almost a blank. It was a sad one, for the troops were suffering from cholera and other fell diseases of the country; and there was no adequate provision for their shelter and protection at a time when the heavy rains of the season were turning the country into a swamp. What Neill thought on this and other subjects may be gathered from the following entries in his private journal: "Thursday,

* Mr. Montgomery Martin, in his work on our "Indian Empire," which contains an immense mass of information relating to the convulsions of 1857, says: "On returning to Cawnpore, a great difference was observable in the place, through the exertions of Neill.

He had felt the necessity of conciliating the shopkeepers, and every morning at daybreak he went among them and endeavoured to reassure them regarding the expected advance of the mutineers, whose appearance in overwhelming numbers was daily expected."

1857.

August 20. Write to Commander-in-Chief about health of troops—that they must not be more exposed. Mention about reports of returning to Allahabad, also the reports from Agra that it was believed there that the (mutinous) troops at Gwalior intended coming here. More of the enemy assembled on the opposite banks of the river. Ride up to camp; find it a perfect swamp; the men all most uncomfortable. Ride with General Havelock, who decides on abandoning the entrenchment.”—— “Friday, 21. Heavy storm and rain last night; men much wetted. Don’t get leave to occupy the stable sheds until the rain comes down. Ride up and see the General this morning, and speak seriously about health of men and the injury to them of being in tents. Ride round with Tytler and show the houses which I would recommend, but it is decided to put the men up in the stables, which are to be cleansed and matted, and the place around them drained. Glad that something is to be done.”—— “Sunday, 23. Receive letters from Sir Patrick Grant that he leaves for Madras on the 22nd, ‘as that celebrated soldier, Sir Colin Campbell, has arrived.’ ‘I do not, therefore, now write to you,’ he says, ‘as your Commander-in-Chief, but as your friend, and in that capacity would beg of you to get on smoothly with your immediate superiors, and not allow differences to arise between you. You are too old a soldier not to be aware that if the senior officers of a force in the field get to loggerheads, the public service must inevitably suffer; and I know you and Havelock too well not to feel that such a result would be infinitely painful to both of you. Your services, from the moment of your arrival in the Bengal Presidency, have been invaluable, and I shall ever look back with immense satisfaction to the good fortune which sent you here at so critical a period. Give your “Lambs”* my assurance that one of my first steps on returning to Madras shall be to see myself that their wives and families are thoroughly well

* The men of the Madras Fusiliers were familiarly known by the designation of “Lambs,” but I have not been able to ascertain to my satisfaction the origin of the designation, though I have inquired in several quarters likely to be informed on the subject. One suggestion worth noting is, that they may have

been called “Lambs,” because in the early days of the regiment a number of men from the 2nd Queen’s Royals, who have the Paschal Lamb on their arms, were drafted into it. It has also been surmised that they were called Lambs on the *lucus à non lucendo* principle. They have a tiger and a lion on their arms.

1857.

cared for in every respect. They shall want no reasonable comfort or accommodation that I can procure for them, and I beg that you will tell your gallant regiment so from me.' Sent the latter portion of this letter to Stevenson, to be communicated to the corps."—— "Tuesday, 25. Ride through the city. About two thousand arms have been collected, and are being broken up. Had I the government of India, I would disarm every man, arm the police with *latties* (clubs), and have soldiers only armed. Native opinion is that Delhi is falling. There is now scarcely any hope of Lucknow. Bruce mentions having been to search the house of a Newab, who is with the Nana, and whose son commands four regiments before Lucknow, and he (Bruce) says that he found five ladies of the family there. Instantly order them to be secured, and to be informed that I keep them as hostages for the safety of our women and children in Oude."—— "Wednesday, 26. These are ticklish times; none but stern measures will answer. Write to General about the women I secured last evening, suggesting to him that Government be asked to secure and hold as hostages all the wives and women of the Princes of Oude and other swells at Calcutta; and that he issue a proclamation to the Oude people to the effect that if one woman or child of ours, falling into the hands of the enemy, is injured, we will hold their wives and children in our hands responsible for it. No chance, however remote, should be neglected." The advice thus offered was taken, and the proclamation was prepared; but when it was shown to Neill, he thought that it was aimless and spiritless. It was, perhaps, never issued in that form. I can find no mention of the proclamation in Marshman's exhaustive biography of Havelock. It is enough to record that no injury of any kind ever befel these native ladies, and that Neill was the last man in the world to have hurt a single hair of their heads.*

* Since the above passage was written, I have chanced upon the following, in Neill's private correspondence, which indicates that this measure was attended with good results: "A few days since there was a meeting of all the insurgent nobles and chiefs, when it was declared unanimously that they disapproved of the Nana's conduct in killing men, women, and children taken prisoners, and that they would treat all women and

children with the greatest respect. I think I mentioned that some native ladies of the families of a noble and his son, now at Lucknow fighting against us, I have in confinement here in their own house; and I had it made known to them, for communication to their husbands and male relatives, that they should be treated with respect and consideration only so long as our people are. The ladies talked of poison;

1857.
September.

With the new month came new interests. Outram was coming on with his reinforcements, though, owing to insuperable obstacles, not so rapidly as had been expected, and the great question of the advance on Lucknow was paramount in all men's minds. Neill, whose guiding principle it was, at this time, to do whatsoever he thought best for the interests of the State, regardless of all considerations of etiquette and routine, opened communications with Outram, as he before had done with Patrick Grant, and freely expressed his opinions. It is a source of infinite regret that two brave and honourable men, whose memories are dearly cherished by the great nation for which they sacrificed their lives, should not have looked, whilst living, with kindlier eyes on each other. But it is not to be disguised that there was continual animosity between Havelock and Neill. It was unfortunate, but on neither side was it culpable. The truth is, that the Generals were essentially unlike each other. I can hardly conceive an idea of two men more dissimilar in character and disposition. Neither, in the whirl and excitement of those troublous times, was capable of appreciating the fine qualities of his brother-soldier. And so it happens that the correspondence of both contains many acrimonious passages, which I have no desire to reproduce; but I do not doubt that if they had lived to look back upon the diversities of opinion which agitated them during those memorable months at Cawnpore, each would have seen in the conduct of the other much to admire and to commend, and that the strife of a few weeks would have been alchemised into the friendship of years.

From the correspondence with Outram, of which I have spoken, some extracts may be given, showing the eagerness with which Neill desired, at the earliest possible moment compatible with full assurance of success, to press on to Lucknow: "September 8. I sent you by express to-day the copy of the note from General Inglis, at Lucknow, of the 1st instant.* General Havelock, I believe, has not sent the said letter from

but seeing that they are treated properly, I suppose that they are all right again, getting over their fears. It is said that this act of mine, and a proclamation sent over to them by Havelock, drawn out at my suggestion by

Captain Bruce, has caused the meeting."
—*General Neill to Mrs. Neill. Cawnpore, September 16.*

* This letter from Colonel Inglis is given at page 392 of Marshman's "Life of Havelock."

1857.

Lucknow to the Governor-General ; so if you think it proper to do so, by sending to Mr. Chester at Allahabad the copy I forward to you, he would send it on. When I got the message from Lucknow to-day, I went to General Havelock with it. He was friendly, and I ventured to suggest that no time was to be lost—that he should immediately commence preparations to cross over into Oude. He felt inclined to do so, and he said the Adjutant-General was of my opinion. I think he ought to cross over and establish himself at Mungulwar, get everything over with him, so that your reinforcements, when they arrive here, may at once move over. No time is to be lost, in my humble opinion. Your men won't be here before the 13th or 14th, at soonest, and if they join him at Mungulwar by the 15th, you would have ten days to relieve the garrison. I submit my opinion to you, who can decide whether they are correct or the reverse ; my great object is, let us be moving. The passage of the river will take several days ; let it be commenced upon at once. Lucknow must be saved. Let the garrison at Cawnpore, left behind, hold out against [illegible] if they come. We can return in time to lick them also.” “ September 9. Much to my extreme horror and real annoyance, I discovered this morning the enclosed note to your address, which I must have most stupidly overlooked in sending off to you the enclosure in which it ought to have been put. I hope you will pardon my most unintentional carelessness. How I could have made the mistake I can't make out. Mr. Edwards* informs me that the two men-servants of Missur Byjenath, a banker of great wealth and much influence at Bareilly, have come to him to-day from their master. They describe the hostility between Hindoos and Mahomedans as very bitter. The former have taken up arms, and in one fight killed several hundreds of Khan Behaudhur Khan's men, who are an ill-favoured rabble. There are no regular troops in the province. Mr. Edwards says, in which I agree with him, that if the Hindoos were en-

* Mr. William Edwards, of the Bengal Civil Service, who has written a most interesting account of his “personal adventures during the rebellion.” He came into Cawnpore on the last day of August. He has himself recorded

how Colonel Fraser Tytler introduced him to “General Neill, who had just driven up in a very nice-looking dog-cart, and we soon got into very earnest conversation.”

1857.

couraged by our people in authority, they would doubtless adopt more energetic measures for ridding themselves of their oppression. It appears Captain Gowan, or Lieutenant, I can't make out which—if the captain, he was the commandant of the 9th Oude Infantry Irregular Force, if a lieutenant, the adjutant of the 18th at Bareilly—with five other officers, are in hiding with the Kearee Thakoor, and they offer to organise the Thakoor's troops if they are authorised to draw money from bankers for this purpose. Mr. Edwards feels certain that Byjenath, with others, would advance the necessary funds for this purpose, if he received some guarantee from him. I agree with Mr. Edwards, the present is a favourable opportunity for communicating with Captain Gowan and Byjenath, and that Government might be induced to authorise up to 50,000 rupees to be at Captain Gowan's disposal for the purpose mentioned. Indeed, so impressed am I with the very great advantage to our Government the fostering and promoting bad blood between the two races, besides encouraging our friends and well-wishers, that had I been in superior command here, and you had not been appointed, I would have taken upon myself at once to have given the authority for the money, and asked for the sanction of Government afterwards. However, the matter is now in better hands, and will no doubt receive your every consideration. I feel perfectly assured, when you get up here and into Oude, you will be able to effect a vast change for us in encouraging the well-disposed. I have heard nothing to-day whether the General crosses before you come up, or when. I hope, however, all will be ready to start by the time the troops you are bringing reach this, or very soon afterwards. The sooner Lucknow is relieved, the sooner we shall be in a position to attack and dispose of others. I am sorry to hear of the outbreak of the part of the 27th Bombay Native Infantry at Kolhapoor. A Lieutenant Kerr, of the Southern Mahratta Horse, with the small party of his men, is said to have behaved nobly. In conclusion, allow me to hint that I have strong doubts whether General Havelock may have sent off a telegram of Inglis's letter to Government. The Telegraph was only opened from this forenoon."—— "September 13. Early on the morning of the 11th, I had the pleasure of receiving yours of the pre-

1857.

vious day from Camp [illegible], and lost no time, with Mr. Edwards, in carrying out your instructions. I wrote to Captain Gowan as follows: 'Sir,—In consequence of representations by you through Mr. Edwards, Collector of Budaon, of your being able, if assisted with money, to organise the troops of the Thakoors where you are, and to get them to assist Government, and act against the rebels, I, on being made acquainted with them, wrote to General Sir J. Outram, commanding the forces in the Central Provinces, and suggested to him that you should be assisted to the amount of 50,000 rupees for that end, and Mr. Edwards has to-day communicated with the native bankers at Bareilly to assist you with sums of money to that extent, as you may require them. I must add, that no time is to be lost in organising these troops, and making an impression against the enemy in any place you can.' I also quoted the order by Government as to the rewards for Sepoys brought to any military authority, as also those for horses and the property of Government brought in, and requested him to give them circulation and publicity as extensively as he could; also to communicate my letter to him to the officer commanding at Nynee Tal, and request his co-operation in any way 'for the good of the service and energetic and vigorous movements against the enemy.' That morning I called on General Havelock, with the view of impressing him with the importance of your orders and views regarding crossing over, and making the necessary arrangements, that there should be no delay in crossing over your reinforcements, and that all should be ready to advance on Lucknow. I showed your letter to General Havelock, and he was displeased that I should have written to you. I made no remark about his having had Captain Gowan's letter so long in his possession, and, as I believe, done nothing. I have only acted in this affair as I will, and as is my habit, on all occasions, for the good of the public service. I only regret General Havelock did not, some time since, what you have authorised me to do. Private feelings, or standing on any delicacy, during the present times in particular, is not to be thought of. I should never give offence to a senior in the General's position if I could avoid it. I certainly never intended to give offence in this instance; but when so much was

1857. at stake, I would have shown the greatest indifference had I not at once given you the information. General Havelock gives me to understand it is his intention to take me with him this time—a piece of good fortune I had not dared to hope for. He talks of my commanding the Right wing of his force, Colonel Hamilton the Left. There will be six European and one Sikh regiment of infantry when you come up, should there not be a division of it into two brigades, at least that part going to Lucknow. There will be great mismanagement if it is attempted to carry on work with officers in command of right and left wings, neither of whom have a brigade staff. General Havelock will have a nice little force, two infantry brigades, his artillery, and the small body of cavalry. There can be no difficulty in crossing this river. I have not heard at what point it is intended. I would prefer to land at the termination of the Trunk Road, not on the island about one mile below it, by which the force recrossed the other day. Any works the enemy may have thrown up on the other bank are contemptible enough. General Havelock was down this morning trying the range of two 24-pounders on this bank, intended to cover a passage of the river. I had given my opinion to Sir Patrick some time since, when H. was in Oude (it was asked), whether I could assist him if he retired in presence of an enemy. This gave him great offence also, and I was told I had misled his Excellency by stating what was considered by him and his engineer officers absurd—that the ground to be commanded was not within his range. This morning's practice has shown him that I am five hundred yards within my mark; these guns, only at four and a half elevation, range far beyond. I was sorry for his firing; in the first place, he uselessly expended powder and shot, and by his fire, if the enemy are up to it, they will know where to place their batteries out of reach of these guns. However, all this shows signs of doing something. I shall be delighted, however, to see you up here, for, until you do arrive, I do not expect to see anything done towards forming the bridges."

The day of departure was now close at hand. On the 11th of September, an officer at Cawnpore wrote in his journal: "We were made happy to-day by General Neill being informed by General Havelock that he intended him to command the right

1857.

wing of the force on the advance on Lucknow." On the 15th he wrote: "The first division of reinforcements arrived this morning. Orders are out to-day for the force to cross into Oude to-morrow. Hurrah! hurrah! General Neill to command the right wing, consisting of the 1st Madras Fusiliers, her Majesty's 5th and 84th Regiment, Maude's battery of artillery." The hour so long and eagerly looked for had come at last. Troops were pouring into Cawnpore, and everything was now in readiness for those operations for the relief of Lucknow, which seemed to be placed beyond the reach of all human accidents. Sir James Outram had arrived in camp, and Neill's heart had warmed to him at once. He had now become very hopeful of success. "Met Sir James Outram at dinner at Bruce's," he wrote in his journal on the 15th; "have a few words' talk with him before; he tells me he will form brigades—will not hear of General Havelock's plan of landing men in the sun on a swampy island. Things will be done well, I see—General Havelock taken into a room after dinner—Crommelin and Tytler sent for, and all their plans swamped—bridge to be first formed, then moved over—Havelock's plan, if carried out, would have rendered *hors de combat* no end of us."—"Wednesday, 16th. Breakfast with Bruce. Sir James shows me his proposed orders. I command first brigade—to appoint my own brigade-major—appoint Spurgin—receive English mails. My name is in every one's mouth. The *Times* has taken it up." He was beginning now to reap the reward of his good service in the applause of his countrymen; and he felt confident that the rest would follow. There was a great work before the army at Cawnpore, and Neill knew what were its perils. "God grant us all and every success," he wrote in his journal, "and may He shield and protect us all on our advance to victory!" But no presentiment of coming evil overshadowed his mind. On the contrary, he wrote very hopefully to his wife expressing his belief that all would be well. "We cross the river again to-morrow," he said in his last letter to that beloved correspondent, "with a very fine force. I have three regiments, my own, the 84th, and the 5th Fusiliers, and a battery of Royal Artillery under Captain Maude. We shall only be away for a few days and relieve the poor people at Luck-

1857.

now. After that, I presume, we shall have to drive the people out of Futtehghur. . . . God grant we may all soon meet. I am in good health; the weather is getting cooler, so all will be well. God bless you, my dearest wife, and kiss all the dear bairns for me." The thought of those absent ones was ever clinging to his heart.

Advance on
Lucknow.

On the 19th of September, everything was in readiness for an advance into Oude. The story of the march is so well told by an officer on Neill's staff, that I give it in the words of the writer. It will be seen how unselfish, how considerate for others, the good General was to the last day of his life. "I shall commence my narrative from the 19th of September, the day on which we crossed into Oude. The kind and thoughtful General, who was always thinking what he could do for others, without a thought for himself, had taken great pleasure in laying in a little store of arrowroot, sago, candles, and wine, to take to the poor ladies who had been suffering for so long in Lucknow; and he took his palkee carriage to place at the disposal of some of them for their journey back to Cawnpore. He took one small tent, which he intended Spurgin and me to share with him; but it so happened that we only used it once all the way over. Well, on the morning of the 19th we got up at two o'clock (we all three lived in the same house at Cawnpore), and crossed over the bridge of boats with the troops, and his brigade was at first formed up on the left, and while halted there, we each took such breakfast as we happened to have in our pockets, and then the brigade was ordered to move off to the right, which was done under a fire from two of the enemy's guns, and some Sepoys who had taken up a position behind some sand-hills. The General, however, pushed forward his skirmishers and drove off the Sepoys, and halted his brigade in a capital position, close behind the said sand-hills. We had to remain out in the sun the whole of that day, as the baggage was much delayed in getting across the bridge and three creeks that had to be forded between the bridge and the mainland. He sat on the ground with his white umbrella over his head, but he did not feel the sun much. We remained in that same position all the 20th

1857.

(Sunday). He slept in his little tent by himself that night. He got up early, as usual, on Sunday morning, and rode out to visit his picquets, accompanied by, I think, Spurgin and myself. We met Generals Havelock and Outram, and rode down with them to the bridge of boats, to see the heavy guns being dragged through the bad ground by the elephants, and then came back and breakfasted; and during the day he read and wrote a good deal, as he always did, and after dinner we sauntered about on the sand-hills, and listened to the enemy's drums and fifes playing at their position about a mile and a half in advance of us. It rained a good deal during Sunday night, and early on Monday morning. He slept, as before, in his little tent by himself. In the evening we sat and talked over our cigars for a good long time, and he then told me confidentially that it was intended that he was to have the command at Lucknow, after it was relieved. We got up a little before daybreak on Monday morning, and everything was got ready for marching, and we marched between six and seven o'clock, the 2nd Brigade being in advance, and when we had gone about half a mile along the road one of the enemy's guns (on the road) opened fire: so both brigades went to the left of the road and formed line, the men wading above their knees in water, or sinking nearly as far in mud, the greater part of the way. The enemy occupied several villages on the brow of a rising ground, immediately in our front; the whole force advanced in line as quickly as they could, and cheering the whole time, and the enemy retreated much faster than we could overtake them. The poor General always took a particular interest in watching his own old regiment. Our light field batteries soon silenced the guns which the enemy had in position at the corners of the villages, and two or three out of five were captured. Just as we had finished chasing the Sepoys off the field, a tremendous shower of rain came down, and it rained incessantly in torrents the whole of the remainder of the day; but that did not prevent us from following up the enemy. We took ground to the right and got on to the road again, and marched about sixteen miles as quickly as we could. The road was strewn every here and there with shoes, which the Sepoys had thrown off to expedite their flight. We halted for a quarter of an hour about

1857. eleven o'clock, and took a mouthful of anything we had ; but that was little enough, and what little it was, was soaked with rain. About half-past three in the afternoon we halted in a tiny village—Serai—and the troops were all quartered in it. We three had two little bits of rooms, one of them being merely the verandah ; however, we were very happy there, and when the baggage came up, got some dry clothes and dined, and sat and talked over the events of the day, and the glorious prospect before us of relieving the Lucknow garrison. The poor General slept on a charpoy in the little verandah room. It rained incessantly all night, and when day dawned on Tuesday, the 22nd, it was still pouring ; but we got up and had an early breakfast, and started again at about eight o'clock, the 1st Brigade being in advance this time : we made a similar march to the one of the day before, and halted about the same time in much the same kind of place. We had only seen small parties of the enemy's cavalry on our flanks occasionally, and there was no fighting of any kind on that day. We had the satisfaction of hearing the booming of guns at Lucknow when we arrived at our new ground, and fired a royal salute from our heavy guns to let the beleaguered garrison know that relief was approaching. We were all drenched this day the same as on Monday.

“ We passed the night of Tuesday, the 22nd,” continues the narrator, “ in a very smoky little hut, and listened to the guns which were being continually fired at Lucknow. We got up soon after daylight on the 23rd, and had an early breakfast, and marched about eight, the General's brigade (the 1st) again leading the way. It was not raining that day, and there was no wind, but a bright sun, so the men felt the heat a good deal. The country was covered with water as far almost as we could see, on both sides of the road, and we saw nothing of the enemy except small parties of cavalry now and then in topes of trees on our flanks, until we approached Alumbâgh, where they were posted in considerable force both of cavalry and infantry, and had some guns with them, two of which commenced firing straight down the road, as soon as we came within range. At the place where we were we could not leave the road on account of the depth of the water, but where the enemy were was generally higher

1857.

ground, and comparatively dry. There was some little delay caused by the 2nd Brigade being ordered to pass the 1st on the road, and the shot from the enemy's guns told a good deal in our ranks, but it did not last very long. Both brigades, as they reached the place where there was not so much water, went off to the left of the road and deployed into line, and advanced the same as they did on the 21st, cheering the whole way, and driving the enemy's infantry before them. Their cavalry had disappeared—at least had moved out of range of our guns—as soon as they saw us advancing. Close to the side of the road there was a very deep ditch of water, and while the poor General's horse was plunging through it, a round-shot passed within a few inches of his back—an escape for which he and we all felt most thankful at the time.* We were exposed to a heavy fire of round-shot, grape, and musketry in this advance, and he was quite delighted with his troops, and the way in which he managed and led them won their admiration. I have him in my mind's eye now, mounted on his charger in front of the Madras Fusiliers, waving his helmet, and joining in the cheers of the brigade to Captain Olpherts's Horse Battery and the Volunteer Cavalry, who were passing along our front at a gallop to follow up the enemy, whose retreat had become too rapid to be followed very effectually by the infantry. We lost a good many men that afternoon. A wing of the 5th Fusiliers, which was on the right of the line, stormed the Alumbâgh enclosure in the most gallant way, and the other wing had to lie down in a rice-field, knee-deep in water, while the line was halted, as some of the enemy's guns had their exact range, and every shot was telling. We drove the enemy back to about a mile beyond the Alumbâgh, and as it was then getting late, and it was evident that the force could not enter Lucknow that evening, we retired and took up a position close to and in the Alumbâgh. The dear General's brigade was on the Lucknow side of the Alumbâgh, and close to the enclosure wall. The whole ground was ankle deep in mud; and now, to complete our *comforts* for the night, the

* Neill himself wrote of this: "I had and nearly fell. Whilst he did so, a most providential escape, but was mercifully spared. Whilst crossing a deep round-shot grazed the horse's quarters, watercourse, my horse plunged down, passing a few inches behind me."

1857.

rain, which had kept off the whole day, now came down in a perfect deluge, but the shower did not last more than an hour. We had no baggage up, and nothing to eat. After taking up our position for the night, the kind General's first thought was for the comfort of his men, and he sent me to General Havelock to ask for orders for the issue of an extra dram, which was accordingly served out. Two of the enemy's guns kept playing exactly on the place where we were, until after dark; the fire of twelve or fourteen of our guns had not been able to silence them, although the practice was good, because they were so well masked. About seven or eight o'clock some of our things began to arrive, and a chair and a small charpoy had been got out of a few huts that were near; but the General's servant did not come up with a change of clothes for him, and Spurgin and I could not persuade him to take some of our dry things which had come up. He would not use the charpoy either, but insisted on my having it, and I did occupy one end of it (it was only about five feet long), and left the other for him in case he should change his mind. Some one lent him a good thick blanket, and he sat on the chair with his feet up on the charpoy, and the blanket over his head and shoulders, and spent the whole night in that way. We got some hot tea between eight and nine o'clock, and had a cigar, and listened to the Lucknow guns, which now sounded quite near, and longed for the morning; when we doubted not that we should again advance, and, as we hoped, rescue our fellow-countrymen in the course of the day. But when the morning of Thursday, the 24th, dawned, the two guns again opened fire on us; those shots that missed us plunged into the garden enclosure behind us, and did much damage among the camp-followers who were there. The brick wall, although high, was no protection, as the shot went through it as if it were but little thicker than paper. To our disappointment, an order came about seven o'clock that the force was to halt that day and retire to a place about a thousand yards in the rear, where it would be more out of range of the enemy's guns. This we did, and in the confusion and crush of baggage-animals and carts consequent on the retrograde movement, the enemy's cavalry quite suddenly charged down on the rear-guard and baggage-guard at full

1857.

speed, and unfortunately killed a good many. The rear-guard mistook the body of cavalry which they saw approaching for some of our own (their uniform was almost exactly the same, and, in fact, many of them had once belonged to the same regiment), and it was not until they were quite close, and they had seen their drawn swords, that they were known as enemies. Our fine General, who was always prepared for emergencies, immediately ordered down a couple of guns, and galloped down to where the attack had been made, and sent me off for the Volunteer Cavalry. Our baggage-animals, to the number of several thousands, had crushed into our camp in one huge mass, and were much in the way. It was all the work of a few minutes: by the time the guns and Volunteer Cavalry had arrived, the enemy's cavalry (about five hundred) had galloped off again, leaving fifteen or sixteen of their number dead behind them. They had killed one officer and twelve or fourteen privates. When that little affair was over, the General's tent was pitched, and all our things, which had been soaking wet for three days, were now spread out to dry in the sun. An order came in the afternoon that a garrison of, I think, two hundred men, was to be left with the sick and wounded and baggage in the Alumbâgh, and that the remainder of the force was to advance on Lucknow next morning, that each officer was to take one servant, and mounted officers their grooms also, and no tents or baggage, which would all follow in two or three days; but we saw nothing of them for two whole months. The troops were to be provided with rations for three days: all the things had to be sent into the Alumbâgh that evening at sunset. We made an arrangement for carrying in the ladies' stores, notwithstanding the prohibition as to baggage. We dined in the open air outside his tent, and were all in high spirits at our bright prospects for the morrow. It had been arranged that the brigades were to be divided, and that General Havelock, with *all* the guns and the 2nd Brigade, were to go by a direct route through some portion of the city, and that the General was to proceed with his three infantry regiments only, by a more circuitous route, and force his way through another portion of the suburbs, and so into the Residency; and this arrangement gave great satisfaction to him, and his noble zeal and emula-

1857.

tion gave him great hopes that he would be the first to reach the Residency. This plan, however, was afterwards changed. Although so confident of success, he was fully impressed with a sense of the danger of the enterprise we were about to undertake, and in talking of anything that he would do after arrival at Lucknow, never failed to add, 'if it be God's will that I should get there!' He, Spurgin, and I slept on the ground in his little tent on the night of the 24th, and got up at daybreak on the 25th, and sent the tent into the Alum-bâgh, where the rest of the baggage had been sent the evening before."*

And now comes the touching story of the last day of the beloved General's noble life, and of its glorious close in the hour of victory. It could not be better told than in the unstudied, soldierly language of the narrator. Such records as this are of inestimable value: "We had some breakfast about seven, and about eight o'clock we marched, the 1st Brigade in advance, in the following order:

Two Companies of the 5th Fusiliers.

Captain Maude's Light Field Battery, R.A.

The remainder of the 5th Fusiliers.

The 84th, and Detachment 64th Regiment.

The Madras Fusiliers.

* I append the final entry in Neill's journal descriptive of this day's work—the last words that he ever wrote: "Thursday, 24. A fine morning: enemy bring up their guns and pound us. It is determined first of all to advance at 8½ P.M., then to halt the day. The troops move back; the artillery practise. Maude's battery had one gun opposed to it, a 9-pounder, which holds out against the whole battery. I again urge that the buildings be taken by a party of infantry, but it is not listened to. Another of the enemy's guns opening on us, and being well within range, I order out two companies of the Fusiliers against it; but as they were about to go, a peremptory order came for the brigade to retire, so I was obliged to give the order. . . . We have been humiliated by a retirement before a contemptible enemy. A spy in—a trustworthy one—reports that the enemy are bolting from Lucknow, and there will be no opposition, yet the orders are out to halt for the day in

our retired position. The guns in front still pound us, and our reply, a battery and three or four large iron guns, can't silence the few contemptible guns in our front. I presume that Sir J. Outram is negotiating. He suggested that General Havelock should send out two regiments to take the guns, but he would not agree, saying if any went the whole should. The enemy's cavalry, about 11 A.M., came down on our rear and baggage, and cut up several followers, and, I regret to add, some of the 90th. I presume the men being griffs, did not know them, and from the proverbial dread of cavalry by infantry at home, they must have given the cowardly scoundrels some advantage against them. Several shots came very close to me. Young Havelock comes in with orders to move to-morrow in two columns; one under Sir J. Outram, the First Brigade, the other under General Havelock, with all the guns."

“ We had not gone two hundred yards when the enemy’s guns opened fire, and we were soon exposed to a most murderous cross-fire from their guns, and also to a heavy musketry fire. The dear General was near the head of the 5th Fusiliers. The road was lined with trees on either side, whose branches met across, and there was such a crush and confusion in the road caused by men, and bullocks, and horses, and branches of trees struck down by the round-shot and grape and musketry, in a perfect storm of which we now were, that there was difficulty in making one’s way to the front. I was sent on with orders for Captain Maude to do all he could with his guns to silence those of the enemy, but his battery was already almost disabled from the number of men and bullocks that had been struck down, so there was nothing left for it but to push on as hard as we could through the dreadful storm; and then the walled enclosures from either side of the road from which the enemy’s infantry had been firing, were cleared by our infantry, those on the right by the 5th Fusiliers and part of the 84th, and those on the left and a village that we had now reached by the remainder of the 84th and 64th, but with considerable loss. This brought the Madras Fusiliers to the front, and on turning a corner in the village two more guns were opened on us, and fired straight down the road up which we were coming. The General immediately saw that these guns must be captured at all hazards, and with his own lips he gave the order for the Madras Fusiliers to charge them. This they did in the most splendid way; they were accompanied by some of the 84th, who happened, at the time, to be in the street of the village when the order to charge was given. The General himself headed the charge, which nothing could resist, and after mowing down a good many of our number with two discharges of grape during the charge, and under a shower of musket bullets, the guns were in our possession. It was here that poor Arnold had his leg carried off, from the effects of which he died a few days afterwards; and many others got dreadful wounds, but all were happy and proud. From this point we diverged off to the right, and wound round the outskirts of the city with very trifling opposition, until we got on to the road which leads along the bank of the Goomty, and straight towards the

1857.
Death of Neill.

1857.

Residency. We had stopped once or twice on our way round the outskirts to let the heavy guns close up, and at one of these halts the General was repeatedly cheered by his men and the artillerymen, which made him very happy, and he laughed so when Captain Olpherts (who is a splendid officer) called out to his men, 'The sound of your guns is music to the ladies in Lucknow.' Soon after we had got on to the road along the Goomty, and little dreaming of the opposition which we had yet to meet, the General several times said: 'How very thankful we should feel for having been preserved through the dangers of the day (it was now between two and three in the afternoon), and I for having escaped when my horse was killed under me!' We were riding quietly along the road at the head of the men, admiring the beauty of some of the buildings, and of the country on the other side of the Goomty, when some guns from that very side suddenly opened on us, and at the same time a sharp fire of muskets from the building known as the 'Mess House,' and from the Kaiser Bagh walls on our left, and two or three guns also kept firing at us from one of the gates of the Kaiser Bagh. The Mess House was within one hundred yards of us. It is an upper-storied house with a turret at each corner, and shots poured out at every window and opening, and our musketry fire could not keep down theirs, and we had not time to wait and storm the house, for it was most essential that relief should reach the garrison that very night, so we were just obliged to push on. The General had two or three rounds fired into the house from one of the guns, which caused their musketry fire to cease for a short time. We then got into a walled enclosure, and rested for a little, and allowed the troops to close up. The General dismounted and sat down, and we had a cigar, I think, and some tea, or something to drink. We then started again, and had to go along a lane, and then through what had been the compound of an officer's bungalow. All this time we were concealed from the enemy's view, but at the end of the compound we had to come out on to one of the main roads, fully exposed to the Kaiser Bagh, and several large mosques and buildings, and for about two hundred yards we had to go through an incessant storm of bullets, grape, &c., to which what we had been exposed to in the morning was not to be

1857.

compared in fierceness. Men were cut down on all sides, and how any single one escaped was perfectly miraculous. At the end of the two hundred yards we got behind the shelter of a large house, which was immediately occupied by the Madras Fusiliers, who, by the General's order, tried hard to keep down the musketry fire from the mosque behind; but it wasn't until after repeated discharges from our guns that it was even partially silenced. We then moved into a lane with a brick wall on either side, and intersected in one or two places by cross-streets, up which the Sepoys poured a most destructive fire as we crossed the openings. We were delayed for some time in this lane, not knowing which was the best route to take to the Residency, from which we were still about three-quarters of a mile distant. All the streets were full of Sepoys, and it was evident that, whichever way we went, we should meet with dreadful opposition. It was now sunset, and it was necessary to make a move; and the route fixed on was one which required those regiments that had gone farthest up the lane to face about, and come back again; so the order of march became somewhat changed, and the 78th Highlanders and Sikh regiment, which had been behind us, and consequently not so far up the lane, turned down at once into the opening through which we were to advance to the Residency, and thus got in front of the 1st Brigade. When they had forced their entrance into the main street, General Havelock sent back for the assistance of the Madras Fusiliers, which accordingly became separated for the time from the 1st Brigade, and dear General Neill regretted much that he could not accompany them, but must remain with the other regiments. A number of guns had to move between the brigades, so that we were some distance apart. When we got out of the lane into the court-yard through which we had to go, we found a great crush of guns and bullocks. And now I approach that most deeply melancholy part of my story which has been the cause of my writing to you. It was now getting dusk, and our infantry were marching through the court-yard, which had flat-roofed houses on either side and at the far end, with an archway in the middle of the far end, under which we had to go. A heavy musketry fire was opened on us from the tops of the houses on either side, and through loopholes in the

1857. parapet that ran along the top of the archway and houses at the far end. This fire knocked down numbers of our poor soldiers; and the fire that we gave in return was useless, as the Sepoys were protected by the parapet that ran along the whole front of the flat-roofed houses; and the houses themselves had all the doorways on the other side, so could not be entered from where we were. The General was sitting on his horse quite coolly, giving his orders, and trying to prevent too hasty a rush through the archway, as one of the guns had not yet been got out of the lane where we had been halting. He sent me back to see what was the delay in getting the gun on; and these were the last words I heard him utter, as I rode off immediately to the lane, and in about three minutes returned with the gun, when, to my great grief and horror, I was told that he was no more. He, sitting there quietly on his horse, had formed too prominent an object for the sure aim of the mutineer Sepoys, who fired at him through a loophole above the archway, and the fatal bullet performed its mission but too truly, and in one instant closed the earthly career of our greatest and most noble soldier and beloved General, our only consolation being that he was at peace, and had died a soldier's death, and passed from a short-lived earthly career of glory into one of glorious immortality. . . . He must have had his head turned towards the lane, watching probably for the gun to make its appearance round the corner, for the bullet entered the side of his head behind, and a little above the left ear. When the fatal bullet took effect the body fell forward on the horse's neck, and the animal, through fright, galloped off towards the lane, and the body fell off near the corner of the lane. Spurgin had gone to the very place where he had seen the body fall off the horse, and was fortunate enough to have it put on to a gun-waggon, on which it was brought into the Residency. We were out all that night, and I followed the gun on which the dead remains were into the Residency compound at daybreak on Saturday morning, the 26th. It was then taken off the gun and put into a doolie. . . . It was unsafe to enter the churchyard during the day, it was so much exposed to the enemy's fire, although our good clergyman, Mr. Harris, offered to go at any hour during the day; but as the garrison custom was to have

1857.

funerals in the evening, we thought it best not to cause unnecessary exposure to the men by having it during the day. He was left just as he was, with a ruzaie wrapped round him, and was committed to the earth at dusk in the churchyard, the funeral service having been performed by Mr. Harris, and many a tear shed and prayer offered up on the occasion. It would have been some little consolation if you could have heard the sorrow expressed by the whole brigade, and more especially by his own Fusiliers. His death was so unexpected by every one. He seemed to move about with a charmed life, and he had been so long looked on as the master-mind and stay of our force by those around him, that his being suddenly cut off came upon us with a terrible shock.”*

Great was the grief, all over India, when it was known that Neill had fallen. From the Governor-General of India, down to the youngest private in the English Army, there was not a man who did not feel that a great soldier had passed away from a scene on which, had God spared him, he might have done even still greater things.† When the despatches of Generals Havelock and Outram were published, some dissatisfaction was expressed by Neill’s friends because there had not been more prominent mention of his death and of the services preceding it; but their disappointment was lightened by the language of admiring regret in which Lord Canning wrote of the deceased warrior when he published those despatches to

* The following is Captain Spurgin’s account of Neill’s death: “My poor friend, General Neill, fell almost the last shot that was fired on the 25th. I was close to him. A wretched man shot him from the top of a house. He never spoke again, and could not have suffered a moment’s pain. There was a gun between us at the time, but I got round and saved his body by carrying it into the entrenched camp on a gun-carriage, and it was buried by his own regiment the next day. . . . What am I to write or say to poor Mrs. Neill? and *he* asked me, before we went into action, in case he fell, to do so. A painful duty, and I do it with a sad heart; but it must be done.” From another passage in this letter it may be gathered that the box

of little comforts and delicacies which Neill had collected for the use of the Lucknow ladies, reached its destination safely. “I went to see Mrs. —,” writes Captain Spurgin, “the morning after I got in. . . . She was so glad to see me; and good old Neill had brought a box of all kinds of things for the ladies, such as arrowroot, sago, candles, &c., and some wine—all of which I had the pleasure of distributing.”

† A soldier of the 78th Highlanders wrote on September 28 to his brother: “And here, when success had crowned our efforts, shocking to relate, our brave General Neill fell. He was an honour to the country, and the idol of the British Army.”

1857.

the world. After speaking of the entrance into Lucknow, and recording his thanks to the victorious Generals, he said, in his official notification : “ The Governor-General in Council forbears to observe further upon information which is necessarily imperfect ; but he cannot refrain from expressing the deep regret with which he hears of the death of Brigadier Neill, of the 1st Madras European Fusiliers, of which it is feared that no doubt exists. Brigadier-General Neill, during his short but active career in Bengal, had won the respect and confidence of the Government of India ; he had made himself conspicuous as an intelligent, prompt, and self-reliant soldier, ready of resource and stout of heart ; and the Governor-General in Council offers to the Government and to the Army of Madras his sincere condolence upon the loss of one who was an honour to the service of their Presidency.” And in England, when the sad news reached our shores, there was scarcely less sorrow. But with this grief for the dead there was mingled a tender and generous regard for the living ; and the honours and rewards which would have been bestowed upon the fallen soldier, were transferred to his widow and children. Neill had already been appointed, for his earlier services in the war, an aide-de-camp to the Queen. The Gazette now recorded that he would have been recommended for the dignity of Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath, had he survived ; and soon afterwards another Gazette announced that the Queen had been “ pleased to ordain and declare that Isabella Neill, the widow of the late Colonel James George Neill, of the Madras Fusiliers, shall have, hold, and enjoy the same style, title, place, and precedence, to which she would have been entitled had her husband, who fell in the gallant discharge of his duty, survived and been invested with the insignia of a Knight Commander of the Bath.” Nor was the great Company, which Neill had served so long and so nobly, forgetful of his claims. They added to these royal rewards a liberal pecuniary endowment.

November 14,
1857.

November 26.

But more honourable to the memory of the Dead even than these testimonials from admiring Governments, was the eagerness with which the great voice of the Nation sought to express alike the sorrow and the gratitude in its heart. To hold public meetings, and to vote statues of marble or bronze, are,

1857.

in all such cases, the common, and indeed the fitting, manifestations of the popular applause. So there were great gatherings in Madras and in Bengal, and again in Neill's native county of Ayr, to raise memorials of the heroic Dead. In India, Madras, with an especial pride in her distinguished soldier, took the lead. The Governor, the Commander-in-Chief, the Chief Justice, and other great representatives of the English communities, took prominent parts on the occasion; and nothing was left unsaid that could illustrate the nobility of his character and the exceeding value of his deeds.* Then Bengal caught the enthusiasm, and all classes of Englishmen in Northern India were eager to join in the demonstration originated by their southern brethren. And no member of that community so eager as Lord Canning, who, above all men with the circumstances of whose lives I have been familiarised through their correspondence, had a great-hearted appreciation of individual merit, especially of individual gallantry, and was ever liberal in its expression. He had then in his Council an honoured friend, a distinguished Madras officer, known to more than one generation as "John Low,"† and it appeared to the Governor-General, who had a delicate sense of what was graceful and becoming, that from no man would the proposal to do honour to the memory of General Neill emanate more fittingly than from his veteran fellow-soldier; so he sat down and wrote the following letter: "*Government House, December 26, 1857. My dear General*

* It is remarkable that, at this meeting, the highest legal authorities in the Presidency dwelt most emphatically, in language of praise, on General Neill's treatment of the Cawnpore murderers, described by some as a violation of law, justice, and humanity. The Chief Justice said that Neill "stood there as the avenger of almost unheard-of crimes." "I am thankful to think," he continued, "that he knew he 'should not bear the sword in vain as the minister of God to execute wrath on those who had done evil.' This passage, if I remember rightly, refers to the civil magistrate, but in time of war the soldier takes the place of civil power. It should not be forgotten that in time of war the maxim, *Cedant arma togæ*, has no place; whilst it should be remembered, *Silent inter arma*

leges." And the Advocate-General said, that when it was known at home how Neill "at Cawnpore had inflicted righteous retribution on those high-caste murderers, the Bengal Brahmin Sepoys, the fame of his deeds ran trumpet-tongued throughout the land, and in England that retribution was not looked upon as vengeance, but simply as that which the Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, the Duke of Cambridge, had so lately said, amidst the cheers of all who heard him, he hoped and trusted would be rigidly carried out—namely, justice, prompt and stern justice, on every sharer in those atrocities."—*Vide cotemporary Report in Madras Athenæum.*

† Now (1866) Sir John Low, K.C.B.

1857. Low,—I have seen in the *Madras Athenæum* of the 10th of December the report of a public meeting held for the purpose of doing honour to the late Brigadier-General Neill, at which Lord Harris presided, and which resulted in the formation of a committee, and the passing of certain resolutions to that end. I have been aware for some time that such a step has been in contemplation at Madras, in which Presidency, as claiming General Neill for its own, it was right that the measure should be originated. But in my opinion it will not be right that India at large, and especially Bengal and the North-Western Provinces, should have no share in this work. General Neill's best service has been rendered on this side of India. His highest honours have been won here. It was at Lucknow that he met his death, enshrining his name for ever in the history of a struggle in which the best and bravest men of any age or country would have been proud to bear a part, and in which there was no leader more reliable, no soldier more forward, than himself. If you agree with me, I would ask leave to go one step further, and to suggest that no person is so well qualified to take the case in hand in this Presidency, and to win support to it, as yourself, holding the high position which you do hold in the Madras Army, and in the Government of India. In the event of a committee being organised to receive subscriptions, and for other purposes, you would, I am certain, obtain zealous co-operation from Mr. Daniel Elliot.* Probably it will be thought that the money which may be collected in this Presidency will be most properly disposed of by handing it over unconditionally to the Madras Committee, to form one fund, at the command of those who have the best title to determine the manner in which we shall do honour to their noble soldier. But whatever may be decided upon this point, I beg you, in the event of your acceding to my suggestion, to place my name upon

* Mr. Daniel Elliot, an officer of the Madras Civil Service, and one of the ablest and best that ever went to India. After a distinguished career in his own Presidency, he went to Calcutta in 1839, as one of the first members of the Law Commission. He was afterwards a member of the Madras Council and of

the Legislative Council of India. He was one of those men whose noiseless beneficence is seldom adequately recognised, and who are doomed to see their inferiors in intrinsic worth and external service praised and rewarded, whilst they remain in the shade with the solace only of a good conscience.

the list of subscribers for one thousand rupees.—Believe me, my dear General Low, very faithfully yours, CANNING.”

1857.

No one will doubt the cordiality with which General Low responded to this appeal. A great meeting was held in the Town-hall of Calcutta; and the veteran Councillor proposed the first resolution: “That this meeting, deeply appreciating the splendid services rendered by the late Brigadier-General Neill, of the Madras Fusiliers, during the late crisis, and recognising the fact that this active and determined officer, with but small means at command, first and effectually stemmed the torrent of insurrection spreading over the North-Western provinces of Bengal, feels specially bound to record its gratitude for such services, and to express its heartfelt regret that his brilliant career was cut short by so untimely though glorious a death.” “When Neill arrived in Bengal,” he said, “he was almost an entire stranger. Yet you recollect what that stranger effected in the course of a few weeks. You recollect the splendid services which he achieved at Benares, and again at Allahabad and Cawnpore—services all different from each other, but all surrounded with dangers and difficulties—difficulties which vanished before the judgment, energy, skill, and devotion to his duty of this remarkable man; and so completely did he do his duty, that he left nothing to be desired.” Others followed in the same strain; and every note of truthful praise that was sounded awakened a burst of enthusiastic applause. One eloquent speaker—Advocate-General Ritchie, a man whose name is never mentioned without respect, concluded his address with these touching words: “He fell pressing through a gateway at Lucknow thronged with the dead, the dying, and the advancing hosts of the British avengers of blood, at the head of his own beloved regiment, with everything to urge the warrior onwards, and to make a moment’s pause as repugnant to his nature as it was perilous. And yet the hero paused on his onward course, and that pause, exposing him to steady, murderous aim from behind the treacherous loophole, cost his precious life. But he paused for no work of slaughter, but for a work of mercy, not to strike down a foeman, but to moisten from his own flask the life of a poor private who had

1857.

sunk wounded or exhausted by his side. We all remember that beautiful story, dear to us from our childhood, of Sir Philip Sydney, when dying on the field of Zutphen, waving from him the cup of cold water that was offered to him, with the words, 'Give it to that poor man: his necessity is greater than mine.' That deed of the Christian warrior is and ever will be unsurpassed; but is it not now equalled? Was not the charity as lovely, the self-denial as sublime, which could stay the advancing footsteps of the fiery Neill, eager to avenge his slaughtered countrymen and countrywomen, that he might succour his poor, faithful, simple-hearted follower, as those which animated even the noble Sydney?"*

And Scotland was not less proud of the hero's memory than was India. When news of his death reached his native county, money was promptly subscribed wherewith to raise a statue in his honour. And in October, 1859, there was a great assemblage of people in Ayr to witness the Inauguration of the Monument. Lord Eglinton, Sir James Fergusson, and other distinguished men were present, and among them Neill's old aide-de-camp, Major Gordon, who shared the dangers of his last days, and was beside him in the hour of his death. The Monument, executed by Noble, is erected in Wellington-square, at the end farthest from the County Buildings, and, according to the local chronicler, "near to the place where the hero was born."† "The figure," it is added, "is of colossal size, ten feet high, and stands upon a pedestal of Dalbeattie granite twelve feet high. The incident seized on by the artist is that which occurred at the railway station at Howrah, when General Neill and the Fusiliers, being about to proceed to quell the mutiny at Benares, a portion of the regiment not having arrived when the train was about to start, and the railway official insisting upon its proceeding without them, General Neill immediately and on the spot had him arrested; and the soldiers coming up shortly

* I cannot refrain from giving this passage, though I cannot vouch for the truth of the anecdote, of which, however, it may truly be said that it is "very like Neill." The reader who has followed the touching narrative of the General's last days, given above, may judge for himself what are the pro-

babilities of the accuracy of the story. Its omission from so detailed and complete a record seems to cast discredit on it.

† This appears to be an error. General Neill was not born in Wellington-square, as generally stated by the Ayrshire biographers.

afterwards, the Fusiliers started off for the scene of danger, and, under their great commander, speedily restored the disturbed district to tranquillity." The pedestal bears the following inscription :

1857.

JAMES GEORGE SMITH NEILL, C.B.,

AIDE-DE-CAMP TO THE QUEEN,

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL IN THE MADRAS ARMY,

BRIGADIER-GENERAL IN INDIA :

A BRAVE, RESOLUTE, SELF-RELIANT SOLDIER, UNIVERSALLY

ACKNOWLEDGED AS THE FIRST WHO STEMMED

THE TORRENT OF REBELLION IN BENGAL.

HE FELL GLORIOUSLY

AT THE RELIEF OF LUCKNOW,

26TH SEPT., 1857,

AGED 47.

The story is now told ; and I hope that in its telling the character of the soldier and of the man has been so indicated, that it is but little necessary to give an elaborate account of the qualities which contributed to its perfection. The lesson to be learnt from his career is a striking one. It teaches us the great duty of "waiting." In the course of a few months General Neill made a great reputation. He had waited long and patiently for his opportunity ; it came at last, and he suddenly developed into a great military commander. In an unexampled crisis he displayed all the finest soldierly qualities ; and there was not among the brave men who were pushing forward to the rescue, one in whom greater confidence was felt from one end of India to the other than in the Colonel of the Madras Fusiliers. All said of him that he was "the man for the occasion." Like the two Lawrences, like Outram, and like Nicholson, he had wonderful self-reliance ; and there was no responsibility so great as to make him shrink from taking upon himself the burden of it. When Lord Canning said of him that "in the great struggle in which the best and bravest of men of any age or country would have been proud to bear a part, there was no leader more reliable, no soldier more forward than Neill," the sentiment was echoed by his countrymen all over the world. All men spoke of his wonderful promptitude and decision, and of the intuitive sagacity which enabled him to do ever "the

Character of
General Neill.

1857.

right thing at the right time and in the right place." But only those who knew him well, who had lived in familiar intercourse and taken sweet counsel with him, knew how truly good and great he was. There were times, as we have seen, when the good old Covenanter spirit glowed within him, and he smote with an unsparing sword at the persecutors of our race. But in all the ordinary transactions of life he was tender and gentle as a woman;* he was one of the most unselfish and considerate of men, unceasingly watchful for opportunities of serving others, and ever forward in the performance of deeds of charity and love. The delight of a happy home, and the bright example of a devoted family, he was an upright and a God-fearing man, walking ever humbly with that God, and recognising in all the vicissitudes of life the hand of an Almighty Providence. His career was short, but it has been truly said, "not too short for his fame;" for in the great muster-roll of Indian heroes, there is scarcely a name more cherished by the present generation of men than that of James George Neill.

* In all of this I am fully borne out by the recorded opinion of one of the very best of men. "In view of such horrid butcheries," wrote Dr. Duff, after speaking of the Cawnpore tragedy, "General Neill, though naturally a mild, gentle, quiet, inoffensive man, seems to have irresistibly felt that an exhibition of stern justice was imperatively demanded. His Scottish Bible-training had taught him that justice was as absolute an attribute of Deity as mercy; that magistracy was 'an ordinance of God,' and expressly designed to be a terror to evil-doers. His sentiments appeared to harmonise with those of Lord Palmerston, who is reported to have said that 'to punish the guilty adequately exceeded the powers of any civilised men, as the atrocities which had been committed were such as to be imagined and perpetrated only by demons sallying forth from the lowest depths of hell;' with those of Lord Shaftesbury, who called aloud for a strict, stern justice on the miscreants who deluged our towns with the blood of women and children, declaring the exaction of such justice essential, not only for the maintenance of our tenure of India, but of the future safety of the

natives themselves; and with those of the American Ambassador, who solemnly averred that the crimes were such as to constitute their perpetrators what pirates are, what cannibals in the Feejee Islands, enemies of the human race, and meriting from the whole of the human race summary and peremptory extirpation. Dismissing, therefore, from his mind all thoughts of harmful lenity, all feelings of maudlin, sentimental pity, he sternly grasped the sword of retributive justice, and as the minister of God who ought not to bear the sword in vain, a revenger to execute wrath on them that did evil (Rom. xiii. 4), he resolved to strike terror into the souls of the evil-doers and their miscreant sympathisers. Nor did he regard it as torture or cruelty, in the ordinary sense of these terms, to cause murderers, who were still reeking with the gore of innocent women and children, to wipe up a portion of the blood which they had no scruples of conscience or of caste in so profusely shedding. Neither, may I add, need any enlightened Christian shrink from avowing that he has felt no especial indignation at a procedure so unwonted, in such strange, unwonted circumstances."

GENERAL JOHN NICHOLSON.

[BORN 1821.—DIED 1857.]

AT the close of the year 1830, a physician practising in 1821—25.
 Dublin died from the effects of a fever caught in the per- Childhood.
 formance of his professional duties. Though only thirty-seven years of age, Dr. Alexander Nicholson had attained considerable reputation in the Irish capital as a skilful and experienced practitioner; and he was a man of true Christian piety and spotless integrity of life.

He died, leaving a widow and seven young children; two daughters and five sons. The eldest of the sons, John Nicholson, born in Dublin on the 11th of December, 1821, at the time of his father's death had just completed his eighth year. But, child as he was, even at that time he was old enough to be a solace and a stay to his widowed mother.

He was a precocious boy almost from his cradle; thoughtful, studious, of an inquiring nature; and he had the ineffable benefit of good parental teaching of the best kind. In his young mind the seeds of Christian piety were early sown, and took deep root. It is still remembered of him that, when he was three years old, his mother happening to go suddenly into a room, found John alone there, with a knotted handkerchief in his hand, striking with all his childish force at some invisible object. When asked what he was doing, he answered, with a grave earnestness of manner, "Oh! mamma, dear; I am trying to get a blow at the devil. He is wanting me to be bad. If I could get him down I'd kill him."

He was exceedingly quick to learn, and when only four Education.
 years of age he could read well; and he never shrank from his lessons. On the death of his father, Mrs. Nicholson removed her young family to Lisburne, where her mother

1825—35. resided;* but finding it difficult to obtain there good masters for her children, she transferred them to Delgany, where excellent private tuition was secured for them. But as John advanced in years and intelligence, it seemed expedient to fit him to make his way in the great world by training of a more public kind; so his mother sent him to the college at Dunganon, of which Dr. Darling was then the principal. In after years he sometimes expressed regret that he had not availed himself more fully of the opportunities then presented to him of increasing his store of learning; but he made very good progress all the same, and at fifteen was probably as good a scholar as the majority of boys at that age. He was, moreover, a fine manly youngster, active and courageous, but withal of a gentle and affectionate nature, and very fond of his mother. I have no faith in men who do not love their mothers, from the first day of their lives to the last.

I have not been able to recover any anecdotes of John Nicholson's boyhood, excepting one, which shows that, at an early age, an accident had well-nigh rendered a public career impossible to him. During one of his vacations he was playing with gunpowder, when a considerable quantity of it exploded in his face and blinded him. He covered his face with his hands, and made his way to his mother, saying to her, "Mamma, the gunpowder has blown up in my face." When he removed his hands, it was seen that his face was a blackened mass; his eyes were completely closed, and the blood was trickling down his cheeks. For ten days, during which he never murmured, or expressed any concern except for his mother, he lay in a state of total darkness; but when at the end of that time the bandages were removed, it was found that God in his mercy had spared the sight of the boy, and preserved him to do great things.

It was plain that there was in such a boy the making of a good soldier; but I do not know that this early promise led in any way to the choice of his profession. I have before observed that the majority of those men who have made for themselves great Indian careers, have gone forth, not because they have had in youth any special liking for the life before

* Mrs. Nicholson is sister of Sir for Beverley and for Honiton, and now James Weir Hogg, Bart., formerly M.P. a member of the Council of India.

them, but because accident or convenience has so directed their ways. Mrs. Nicholson had five sons, and a slender income, derived mainly from the rents of some small estates in Ireland, and it was a matter of serious concern to her how to provide for this fine batch of promising youngsters. It is not strange that ever and anon these grave thoughts expressed themselves in a troubled countenance. When quite a child, John would say sometimes, with a loving kiss to his mother, "Don't fret, mamma dear, when I'm a big man I'll make plenty of money, and I'll give it all to you." Words often uttered, before and since, but seldom, as in this instance, so religiously fulfilled! The chance was not very far distant. Mrs. Nicholson's brother, Sir James Hogg, had "large Indian interest." When John had nearly completed his sixteenth year, his uncle obtained a cadetship for him in the Bengal Infantry. He made all haste to England, and after spending a short time with the same good friend, who helped him with advice and with money to obtain his outfit, embarked on board the *Camden* for Calcutta. He had left home carrying with him the most precious counsel. "Never forget to read your Bible," were his mother's last words, given to him with her parting benediction. And he never did forget the pious admonition.

1835—39.

Appointment
to India, 1837.

The voyage to India was not an eventful one. He kept very much aloof from the other youngsters on board, whom he described as, for the most part, of a noisy riotous kind. He read much every day, never forgetting the Book of Books morning or evening, and made by his uniform steadiness of conduct a most favourable impression on the mind of the captain of the ship. Having reached Calcutta in the month of July, he spent a short time in the vice-regal capital, and was then appointed to do duty with the 41st Regiment of Native Infantry at Benares. After a while he was permanently posted to the 27th Sepoy Regiment, which was cantoned at our frontier station of Ferozepore. "I intend setting out on the 1st of January," he wrote to his mother, in December, 1839, "and expect to be rather more than three months on the road. I am afraid it will prove a very unpleasant march to me, as I go alone, and am unacquainted with the language and country." These difficulties were readily overcome. The

1838.

1839—41. young Ensign arrived at the remote station, and joined the regiment, which was to be his home.* But new difficulties beset him there; he found that there were no houses—that he was compelled to build one, and that he must pass the hot weather in a tent. So, in common course, he was subjected to a process of “seasoning.” In the early part of July he wrote to his mother: “I have not forgot your parting advice to read my Bible daily. . . . I have just recovered from a severe attack of fever, brought on by the want of proper shelter; but my new house will soon be finished, and then I hope I shall enjoy my usual health. You can have no idea how the hot weather enervates the body, and, if you do not take special care, the mind also. I am just finishing a most interesting work, which, if you have not already read, I strongly recommend you to do so; it is Faber’s *Fulfilment of the Scriptural Prophecies*.” In the following month he wrote to the same beloved correspondent: “You ask if the climate agrees with me. I think so far it has, considering how much I have been exposed since I came out. I am nearly six feet high now, and expect, if my health continues good, to be three or four inches taller; but I think I am thinner even than I was at home.”

Afghanistan.

In the middle of the month of October, 1840, his regiment was warned for service in Afghanistan, which was at that time occupied by British troops, and overrun by British diplomatists. It was a season of delusive calm. Our British regiments were ordered, in ordinary course of relief, into the dominions of Shah Soojah, as if they were going to a British province. But it was not long before the 27th, after having marched into Afghanistan, were excited by the prospect of a brush with the Sikh. “Our brigade,” wrote young Nicholson, in July, 1841, to Sir James Hogg, “was sent down to Peshawur, in May, to assist a convoy, on its way up, under Captain Broadfoot, which ten thousand Sikhs of General

* Of Ferozepore, John Nicholson wrote to his mother in June: “This station is a perfect wilderness; there is not a tree or blade of grass within miles of us, and as to the tigers, there are two or three killed in the neighbouring jungle every day. I intend in the cold weather to have a shot at them, but at present it is dangerous work, from the great heat.

The Court of Directors will have a sufficiency of work next cold weather, or I am much mistaken. The Russians are advancing towards Balkh. To watch them and the Sikhs, I suppose this station has been made head-quarters of the division; what the Staff are to do for houses on their arrival, I know not.”

1841—42.

Avitabile's force, who had mutinied and seized two guns, threatened at the Attock. However, hearing of our approach by forced marches, they made off across the Caubul river, and left the detachment at liberty to proceed. We suffered a good deal from the heat on our return to Jellalabad, and, without halting there, continued our march to Caubul, where the other corps remained; but we proceeded to relieve the 16th at Ghuznee, and are now comfortably settled there." The 27th, under Colonel Palmer, formed the garrison of Ghuznee, the capture of which a year or two before had consummated the revolution which placed Shah Soojah "upon the throne of his ancestors." And there, when the counter-revolution broke out in 1841, it found young Nicholson with his regiment—a tall, slim stripling of eighteen.*

When the "insurgents," as they were then called, arose, and strove mightily to shake off the double burden of an unpopular monarch and a foreign usurpation, it was the especial work of one of the leading Afghan chiefs to obtain repossession of Ghuznee. A British garrison is never likely to surrender to an Oriental enemy; but what could a single regiment do against the multitudinous array of fighting men sent against them? It happened that a second enemy, even more formidable than the first, appeared at the same disastrous point of time. Snow began to fall heavily. The rigours of winter were setting in. The reinforcements sent from Candahar to the relief of Ghuznee retraced their steps. This gave new heart to the Afghans. The British regiment for some time held the city, but the inhabitants undermined the walls and admitted the Barukzye fighting men. Then the English officers were compelled to withdraw with their Hindostanee troops into the citadel. There they were exposed to all the merciless severities of the northern winter. But they held their own manfully until their supplies of water were exhausted, and then they were compelled to capitulate. An

* He appears at this time to have had some idea of obtaining an appointment in Shah Soojah's service, for he wrote from Ghuznee in August: "The service which I spoke to you about wishing to enter was not the Nizam's, but that of Shah Soojah-ool-Moolkh, whom we have lately restored to the

throne of Caubul, and whose army is officered by Europeans, who receive a much larger salary than they do when serving with their regiments. However, I shall soon pass in the language, and perhaps through my uncle's interest may obtain some appointment in Hindoostan better worth having."

1842.

agreement was signed with the Afghan leaders, by which they promised our people safe-conduct to the Punjabee frontier. But as the snow was still lying in the passes, it was necessary that they should remain a little longer in Ghuznee; so quarters were found for the British regiment in a part of the town just below the citadel. Afghan treachery, however, soon displayed itself in its worst colours. The British troops were foully attacked in their new quarters. Then, in the hour of deadly peril, the heroic qualities of John Nicholson, a youth of twenty, manifested themselves in all their nascent strength. The story is told by one who fought beside him. "I was in the next house with Burnett of the 54th and Nicholson of the 27th," wrote Lieutenant Crawford, soon after the event, "there being no decent room for me in my own proper quarters. On hearing the uproar I ran to the roof to see what was the matter; and finding what had taken place among my men, and that balls were flying thick, I called up Burnett. He had scarcely joined me when he was struck down by a rifle-ball which knocked his eye out; and as he was then rendered *hors de combat*, I assumed command of the two companies of the 27th that had been under him; and Nicholson and myself proceeded to defend ourselves as well as circumstances would permit. We were on the left of the heap of houses occupied by our troops, and the first and sharpest attacks were directed at us; the enemy fired our house, and gradually, as room after room caught fire, we were forced to retreat to the others, till at last, by midnight of the 9th, our house was nearly burnt in halves. We were exhausted with hunger and thirst, having had nothing to eat or drink since the morning of the 7th. Our ammunition was expended; the place was filled with dead and dying men, and our position was no longer tenable; but the only entrance, in front of the house, was surrounded by the enemy, and we scarcely knew how to get out and endeavour to join Colonel Palmer. At last we dug a hole through the wall of the back of the house: we had only bayonets to work with, and it cost us much labour to make a hole sufficiently large to admit of one man dropping into the street below; but we were fortunate enough to get clear out of our ruined quarters in this way, and to join the Colonel unperceived by the savages around us."

1842.

But by this time all hope of successful resistance had passed away; for the Hindostanee Sepoys, worn out by cold and hunger, had lost all heart, and were eager to seek safety in flight. So again Colonel Palmer entered into terms with the enemy, and engaged to surrender the arms of his force on condition of the Afghan leaders pledging themselves to treat their prisoners honourably, and conduct them in safety to Caubul. There was the bitterness of death in this order to all heroic minds; and it is recorded that "Nicholson, then quite a stripling, drove the enemy thrice back beyond the walls at the point of the bayonet, before he would listen to the order given him to make his company lay down their arms. He at length obeyed, gave up his sword with bitter tears, and accompanied his comrades to an almost hopeless imprisonment."

Now began a time of miserable captivity. In a small Captivity room, eighteen feet by thirteen, the prisoners were confined. When they lay down to rest at night they covered the whole floor. From this wretched dungeon, after a while, even light and air were excluded by the closing of the door and window. Cleanliness even was a blessing denied to them. The linen rotted on their backs, and they were soon covered by loathsome vermin. In this pitiable state, never breathing the fresh air of heaven, the spring passed over them; and then in the middle of May there was a little change for the better, for once a week they were suffered to emerge from their dark and noxious dungeon and look out into the face of day for an hour, from the terrace of the citadel. A month afterwards they were moved into better quarters, and an open court-yard allowed them for exercise. The delight of this was so great after the stifling and pestilential atmosphere of their first prison, that for months they slept in the open court, wrapped in their rude sheepskin cloaks, with nothing above them but the canopy of heaven. At last, in the third week of August, they were startled by the news that they were to be conveyed to Caubul; and presently they found themselves, slung in camel panniers, jolting on to the Afghan capital.

At Caubul, John Nicholson and his companions were taken before the famous Afghan leader, Akbar Khan, who spoke kindly to them, bade them be of good cheer, gave them a good dinner, and then sent them to join the prisoners under

1842. his own care. Of this dinner John Nicholson, after his release, wrote an interesting account to his mother, saying : " The day we arrived at Caubul, we dined with Mahomed Akbar. Many of the principal men of the city were present ; and I never was in the company of more gentlemanlike, well-bred men. They were strikingly handsome, as the Afghan Sirdars always are, and made most polite inquiries regarding our health, how we had borne the fatigue of the journey, &c. Immediately opposite to me sat Sultan Jan, the handsomest man I ever saw in my life ; and with a great deal of dignity in his manner. He had with his own hand murdered poor Captain Trevor in the preceding winter ; but that was nothing. As I looked round the circle I saw both parricides and regicides, whilst the murderer of our Envoy was perhaps the least blood-stained of the party. I look upon our escape as little less than a miracle. I certainly never expected it ; and to God alone thanks are due."* When the Ghuznee party joined Akbar Khan's prisoners, the worst part of their captivity was over. " We found," wrote one of the party afterwards, " our countrymen living in what appeared to us a small paradise. They had comfortable quarters, servants, money, no little baggage, and a beautiful garden to walk about in. To our great regret, we had only been four or five days in this Elysium, when we were sent off to Bameean." The armies of General Pollock and General Nott

* Of the Afghan character generally, John Nicholson appears to have formed no very favourable opinion. In the letter quoted in the text, he wrote : " I sent you from Ferozepore a newspaper containing a tolerably correct, though brief, account of us at Ghuznee, from November, 1841, till September, 1842. I must, however, mention some traits in the Afghan character, which I had full leisure to study during my imprisonment. They are, without exception, the most bloodthirsty and treacherous race in existence, more so than any one who had not experience of them could conceive ; with all that, they have more natural, innate politeness than any people I have ever seen. Men of our guard used to ask us of our friends at home : ' Have you a mother ?—have you brothers and sisters ?—and how

many ?' It has often been said to me by a man who (to use an expression of their own) would have cut another's throat for an onion, ' Alas ! alas ! what a state of mind your poor mother must be in about you now ; how I pity both you and her !' And although insincere, he did not mean this as a jest." In another letter he said : " With regard to the Afghans, I cannot describe their character in language sufficiently strong ; this much, however, respecting their patriotism, which people at home laud them so much for ; they have not a particle of it, and from the highest to the lowest, every man of them would *sell* both country and relations. In fact, our politicals found out latterly that the surest mode of apprehending a criminal was to tamper with his nearest friends or relations."

1842.

were advancing triumphantly upon Caubul; and the Afghan leader, who knew the value of his prisoners, was eager to keep them in safe custody until he could turn them to proper account. Even in their new prison-house on the Hindoo-Koosh, among the giant-caves of Bameean, it hardly seemed to him that they would be safe; so he sent orders for their conveyance to Kooloom. But deliverance was now close at hand. Afghan cupidity was seldom in those days proof against the temptations of English gold. The prisoners bribed the officer in whose custody they were with large promises, to be redeemed on their release. From this time all danger was at an end. They opened communications with General Pollock, turned their faces again towards Caubul, and on the 17th of September met the party which the General sent out to their rescue, and found themselves free men. "When I joined the force at Caubul," wrote John Nicholson some months later, "Richard Olpherts, of the 40th, was very kind to me. Indeed, but for his kindness, I don't know what I should have done. He supplied me with clothes and other necessities, and I lived with him till I reached Peshawur."

Release from captivity.

The victorious army having set its mark upon Caubul, returned to the British provinces. But new trouble was in store for John Nicholson. Whilst he had been suffering captivity in his Afghan prison, his brother Alexander had gone out to India, and had marched with his regiment into Afghanistan. On the way from Caubul, the brothers met; but a few days afterwards the enemy attacked our rear-guard, and Alexander was killed in action. It was John Nicholson's sad duty to communicate this distressing intelligence to his mother: "It is with a sorrowful heart," he wrote on the 6th of November, "that I sit down to write to you now, after a silence of more than a twelvemonth. Indeed, I should scarcely dare to do so now, were I not encouraged by the knowledge that God will enable you to bear your sad loss with Christian resignation, and comfort you with his Holy Spirit. Poor Alexander is no more. He was killed in action, when on rear-guard on the 3rd instant; but I know that you will not sorrow as one without hope, but rather rejoice that it has pleased the Lord to take him from this world of sorrow and temptation. Poor boy, I met him only a few days before his death, and a happy

Return to India.

1842—46. meeting it was. Now, my dearest mother, let me entreat you not to grieve more than you can help. Alexander died a soldier's death, in the execution of his duty, and a more glorious death he could not have died."

After a grand ovation on the frontier, the army was dispersed. John Nicholson then, after the perilous excitement of this his first service, subsided for a time into the quietude and monotony of cantonment life. His regiment was stationed at Meerut, but, although it was one of the largest and most bustling of our military cantonments, the uneventful dreariness of his daily life oppressed him after the excitement of the preceding years. "I dislike India and its inhabitants more every day," he wrote to his mother, in one of those hours of despondency which are common to the careers of all great men, "and would rather go home on 200*l.* a year than live like a prince here. At the same time I have so much reason to be thankful, that I do not grumble at my lot being cast in this country." But the young soldier was not doomed to a lengthened period of inactivity, for he was made Adjutant of his regiment, and he had thus the best opportunity that could have been afforded to him for perfecting himself in the practical knowledge of his professional duties. There was peace, but not of long duration. Soon it was plain that another crisis was approaching; and then commenced that great series of events which tested the qualities and made the reputations of so many men now great in Indian history. The Sikh army, no longer restrained by the strong hand of Runjit Singh, invaded the British frontier, and dared us to the conflict. Then the work of the English soldier done for a time, the work of the administrator commenced. The Sikh Empire, which the victories of the Sutlej had laid at our feet, was left in the hands of the child-Prince who represented the house of its founder; and whilst we fenced him round with British bayonets, we at the same time endeavoured to fit him for future government. A Council of Regency was formed, and Colonel Henry Lawrence, as related in a previous Memoir, was placed at its head.

1846. It happened that John Nicholson was then with the army on the frontier. He had been attached to the Commissariat Department, and was present at the battle of Ferozeshuhur;

1846.

but his position did not afford the means of personal distinction, and he was little more than a looker-on.* The time, however, had come for the young soldier to divest himself for a time of the ordinary accompaniments and restraints of military life. A new career was about to open out before him—a career that had many attractions for one of his ardent, enthusiastic nature, for it was one in which he would no longer be kept down by the dead weight of a seniority service. As a regimental subaltern, there was little that he could do to distinguish himself; still less, perhaps, to be done in the subordinate ranks of the Commissariat Department. But he had made the acquaintance of George and Henry Lawrence in Afghanistan. With the former he had been a fellow-captive, in the hands of Saleh Mahomed; and the latter, who accompanied the Sikh Contingent to Caubul, had soon discerned the fine soldierly qualities of the subaltern of the Twenty-seventh. To such a man as Henry Lawrence, the character and disposition of young Nicholson were sure to recommend him, as one to be regarded with great hope and with tender affection. They parted, but Lawrence never forgot the boy, and when they met again on the banks of the Sutlej, the elder man, then in high place, stretched out his hand to the younger, and John Nicholson's fortune was made.

After the campaign on the Sutlej, Cashmere, which had been an outlying province of the Sikh Empire, was ceded to the English, in part payment of the expenses of the war; and it was made over by us, or, in plain language, sold, to the Maharajah Gholab Singh for a million sterling. At the request

* From Lahore, he wrote on the 27th of February, to his mother: "As you will see by the date, we are encamped at the capital of the Punjab, without having fired a shot since we crossed the Sutlej on the 10th instant—a proof of how completely the Sikh army has been humbled, and its strength and confidence lessened. Our loss since the commencement of the war has—though very heavy—been nothing in comparison with theirs; it is believed that at least half the force they had in the field at Sobraon on the 10th perished, and our

trophies are two hundred and thirty guns, besides innumerable standards, arms of every description, and nearly all the camp-equipage they brought across the river with them. . . . You will be glad to hear I have got a Commissariat appointment from Colonel Stuart. It scarcely gives me any increase of pay at present, but will do so after I have served a few years in the department. I passed the interpreter's examination in November last, at Umballah."

1846. of the chief, the British Government consented to send two English officers to instruct his troops in our system of discipline; and Captain Broome of the Artillery and John Nicholson were selected by Lord Hardinge for the duty, in the early part of March, 1846. The Governor-General sent for Nicholson, and offered him the appointment in a manner very pleasing to the young soldier. "I accepted it gladly," he wrote to his mother, "on the condition that, if on trial I did not like it, I might fall back on my old Commissariat office." Early in April he reached Jummoo, from which place he wrote, in the following month: "My last will have informed you of my arrival here with Maharajah Gholab Singh on the 2nd of April. Since then I have been leading the most monotonous life you can well imagine; I have no duties of any kind to perform, and am quite shut out from the civilised world. I think I mentioned to you in a former letter that I did not believe the Maharajah was really desirous of having our system of discipline introduced into his army; so it has turned out he merely asked for two European officers because he was aware of the moral effect their presence would have at his Durbar in showing the terms of intimacy he was on with the British Government, and made the wish to have his army disciplined a pretence. As it at present stands, the appointment can't prove a permanent one, as the Maharajah will soon become tired of paying mine and Captain Broome's, the Artillery officer's, staff salary. Hitherto we have both received every civility from him, and as long as he considers it his interest to treat us well, he will doubtless do so. The Maharajah talks of going to Cashmere next month and taking me with him. I look forward with great pleasure to a trip to this beautiful valley (albeit in such company), believed by natives to have been the earthly Paradise."*

So they went to Cashmere, ostensibly to drill the infantry

* In another letter, written in June, he still complained of the same want of employment. "I have already," he said, "informed you of the nature of my appointment, and that up to the date of my writing my duties had been merely nominal ones. I regret to say they still continue so, and after the busy life I have led for the last three

years, and the excitement of the late campaign, my present want of employment renders my exile from the civilised world irksome to a degree; so much so, that, should this state of things last much longer, I shall very likely throw the appointment up and fall back on the Commissariat, though it is not a department I am very partial to."

regiments of the Maharajah ; but Gholab Singh really wanted them for no such purpose. Their presence in his country was sufficient to show that he had the support of the British Government. This, however, did not avail him much ; for a strong party, under the old Sikh governor, resisted the transfer of the territory to its new ruler ; and the English officers were in danger of their lives. The story is told by Nicholson himself, in a letter to his mother : “ I left Jummoo for Cashmere,” he wrote on the 26th of September, 1846, “ towards the latter end of July, and arrived there on the 12th of August, much pleased with the beautiful scenery and fine climate of the mountain range which we crossed to get into the valley. You will remember that the province of Cashmere was made over to Gholab Singh by our Government. At the time of our arrival, however, though he had a few thousand men in the valley, he had by no means obtained possession of the place. The son of the late governor, under the Sikhs, having raised a considerable force, showed an evident disinclination to surrender the government—Gholab Singh, moreover, being very unpopular in the valley, on account of his known character. We had not been many days in the city before we learnt that the governor had made up his mind to drive Gholab Singh’s small force out of the valley and seize us. We had great difficulty in effecting our escape, which we did just in time to avoid capture, and marching by one of the southern passes, joined the Maharajah here a few days ago. As we left the valley, the governor did, as we heard he intended to do by the Maharajah’s troops, and the task of dispossessing him, and making over the province to Gholab Singh, now devolves upon our Government.” “ The view you have taken of my position here,” he added, “ is perfectly correct, with this addition to the disadvantages you enumerate, that I have no duties to perform. The Maharajah does not want his troops disciplined ; and as it was the hope of distinguishing myself by a zealous and successful discharge of the duties nominally attaching to the appointment, that induced me to accept it, now that after six months’ experience I find that the duties are entirely nominal, the inducement to seclude myself from the civilised world and undergo many annoyances and inconveniences no longer exists, and I would not hesitate to resign

1846—47. the appointment immediately, were it not that I have good reason for believing that it will be done away with before the end of the year. It will then depend on Lord Hardinge whether I fall back on the Commissariat, or get the 'something better' he promised me, on offering me my present appointment."

The insurrection was overcome, and, in November, Nicholson was again settled at Cashmere. On the 19th he wrote to his mother, saying: "Colonel Lawrence and the rest of the party left this three days ago, and I am now quite alone, and, as you may suppose, feel very lonely, without an European within scores of miles of me. I am for the present officiating in the North-West Frontier Agency, which Colonel Lawrence has recommended my being put permanently into. If his recommendation be attended to, I shall probably be stationed either at Lahore or somewhere in the Jullundur Doab; otherwise, I shall have to return to the Commissariat, as it is not intended to continue my present appointment, it being evident that the Maharajah does not wish our system of discipline introduced into his army. Whatever is done with me, I shall not be sorry to get away from Cashmere, which at this season is anything but a terrestrial Paradise. My fingers are so cold that I can scarcely hold the pen, and glazed windows are unknown here."

A few weeks after this letter was written, Lieutenant John Nicholson was formally appointed an Assistant to the Resident at Lahore, and early in the new year (1847) he started for the Sikh capital. One of his younger brothers, Charles Nicholson, had a short time before arrived in India, and John, to his great joy, had learnt that the youth was now with his regiment in the Punjab: "I left Cashmere on the 7th of February," he wrote to his mother in April, "crossing eight and a half feet of snow in the Poonah Pass. On my arrival at Ramnuggur, within six marches of Lahore, I received instructions to proceed to Mooltan and Dhera Shyee Khan, on the right bank of the Indus. I arrived here, having accomplished my trip, on the 20th of this month, and after eating a hearty breakfast, set out to look for Charles. Fancy neither of us recognising the other. I actually talked to him half an hour before I could persuade myself of his identity.

He is as tall, if not taller than I am, and will, I hope, be much stouter and stronger in the course of another year or two. Our joy at meeting you will well understand, without my attempting to describe it. . . . You may remember my writing to you, some time ago, that the want of society had rendered me low-spirited. Well, I have within the last few months become so reconciled to living alone, that really were not Charles here, I should wish myself away again in the Cashmere hills or Jummoo forests."

1847.

He was now fairly launched into the Political Service, and In the Punjab under the very best of masters. He could have had no brighter example before his eyes than that of Henry Lawrence, nor in any part of India could he have found, in the subordinate agency of the British Government, more fitting associates than those who, though often severed by long distances from each other, were doing the same work with one heart and one hope. A few weeks were spent at Lahore; and then, at the beginning of June, John Nicholson was despatched again by his chief on a special mission to Umritsur, for the purpose of inspecting and reporting on Govindghur, and the general management of the Umritsur district. "In this way," added Colonel Lawrence, "by visits of a week or a month to different quarters, we may help the executive as well as protect the people." At the end of the month, Nicholson was deputed to the Sind Sagur Doab, or country between the Jhelum and the Indus, and told to consider that tract of country as his especial charge. "You are requested," wrote Lawrence, "to cultivate the acquaintance of the two Nazims, Sirdars Chuttur Singh and Lal Singh, as also of their deputies, and indeed of all the respectable Kardars that you meet. Much may be done by cordiality, by supporting their just authority, attending to their moderate wishes, and even whims, and by those small courtesies that all natives look to, even more than they do to more important matters. I need only hint at these points to ensure your zealous attention to them. The protection of the people from the oppression of the Kardars will be your first duty. . . . Your next most important care will be the army.

1847.

... Without allowing the troops to be unduly harassed, see that parades and drills are attended to. I insist upon insubordination and plunder being promptly punished; and bring to my notice any particular instances of good conduct. Avoid as far as possible any military movement during the next three months; but should serious disturbance arise, act energetically."

But it was not permitted to him to remain quiet. At the beginning of the month of August, Captain James Abbott, who then held the office of Boundary Commissioner, having in vain cited to his court the chiefs of Simulkund, "to answer for the most dastardly and deliberate murder of women and children at Bukkur," requested Nicholson to move up his force to Huzroo, so that in a single movement he might fall upon Simulkund. "This," wrote Captain Abbott, "being effected, and Lieutenant Nicholson finding it advisable to assume a still more advanced position at Ghazee, I, at ten o'clock on Monday night, the 2nd instant, marched from Koth, at the head of about three hundred and fifty bayonets, over the Gundgurh mountains, upon Simulkund, whilst Sirdar Jhunda Singh, under my instructions, marched from Hurkishengurh, by the same route, at the same hour, with a wing of Dhara Singh's corps, some cavalry, and fifteen zumboorahs. Lieutenant Nicholson's two columns arrived at Simulkund shortly after sunrise. He found the place entirely abandoned, and took possession."

The cold weather of 1847-48 passed quietly over. Things seemed to be settling down in the Punjab, and both the Governor-General and the Lahore Resident, encouraged by the general tranquillity, turned their faces towards home. In the part of the country which was the scene of Nicholson's labours, there were no signs of trouble. "Lieutenant Nicholson," so ran the official narrative, "reports that the country around Hassan Abdal and Rawul Pindee, hitherto more or less disturbed, is perfectly quiet, and that the Kardars, for the first time for years, move about without guards."

But the calm, like many others before and since, was a delusive one. It promised a season of rest, but it was the precursor of a storm. The nationality of the Sikhs had not been destroyed. The British officers who were governing the

1848.

country for them were wise after their kind, and overflowing with benevolence. But their presence was hateful to the great chiefs whose power they had usurped, and they determined to rid themselves of it. In the spring, Moolraj had rebelled against the Double Government, and had killed the English officers sent to Mooltan to instal another governor in his place, and the summer saw the whole country seething with "rebellion" of the same kind. At this time John Nicholson was at Peshawur, serving under George Lawrence. A severe attack of fever had prostrated him, and he was lying upon a sick-bed, when news came that Chuttur Singh, one of the most powerful of the Sikh chiefs, and one whom we most trusted, had thrown off the mask, had raised the Hazareh country, and was about to seize the important fortress of Attock. Lawrence and Nicholson were speedily in consultation. "What do you wish done?" asked Nicholson. "Had you been fit for the work," replied Lawrence, "I should have wished to send you to secure the post; but you are not fit to go on such a service." "Certainly I am," said Nicholson. "The fever is nothing; it shall not hinder me. I will start to-night." Consent was given, and it was arranged that he should take with him an escort of sixty Peshawur Horse and a hundred and fifty men of a newly-raised Mahomedan levy, who were believed to be true and staunch to fight against the Sikhs.

"Never shall I forget him," says a brother-officer who was with him at Peshawur, and who has supplied me with particulars of this epoch of Nicholson's career—"never shall I forget him, as he prepared for his start, full of that noble reliance in the presence and protection of God, which, added to an unusual share of physical courage, rendered him almost invincible. It was during the few hours of his preparation for departure that his conduct and manner led to my first knowledge of his true character, and I stood and watched him, so full of spirit and self-reliance, though only just risen from a sick-bed, with the greatest admiration."

He made a forced march to Attock, and arrived before the fort just in time to prevent that portion of the garrison which was hostile to us from closing the gate against him. "He had travelled," says my informant, "so fast that but few of his

1848.

escort had been able to keep up with him;* but with these few he at once commanded the submission of all but the most desperate, and these he soon quelled by his personal prowess. A company of Sikhs in command of one of the gates were prepared for resistance, but he at once threw himself among them, made them arrest their own leaders, and in a few minutes was master of the position. This I learnt afterwards from eye-witnesses who served under me. Having made the place secure, placing in charge the persons whom he could best trust, he lost no time in taking the field, and by his rapid movements for a long time checked the troops from Hazareh, preventing them from getting into the open country and proceeding to join Shere Singh's army."

But the history of the eventful days which followed this reinforcement of Attock must be told a little more in detail. From Attock, Nicholson marched with sixty horse and forty foot men to Hassan Abdal. "On my arrival there," he wrote to the Lahore Resident, on the 12th of August, "learning the hundred Goorchurras of Sirdar Mehtab Singh, Majeetia, here, had abused and expelled from camp their Commedan for refusing to join the Hazareh force, I paraded the party, and dismissed and confined the ringleaders on the spot. The remainder begged forgiveness, and having some reason to believe them sincere, and wishing to show that I was not entirely without confidence in Sikhs, I granted it. I shall, of course, keep a sharp look-out on them in future. . . . I am raising a militia for the protection of this district. A regular soldier of any kind I have not with me, and of the small party I brought with me from Peshawur, there are but three men whom I ever saw till I started. . . . Everything, if I may offer an opinion, depends on promptly sending up troops. A single brigade, with a 9-pounder battery, would be ample, with the aid which Captain Abbott and myself would be able to render. Delay will have a bad effect in every way, and may afford the mutineers opportunities of tampering with the Peshawur force."

On the following day he wrote again to the Resident, saying :

* Nicholson himself says, in his very modest account of this exploit, "Of sixty horse which left Peshawur with me, not half the number arrived along with me ;

and the infantry, which should have been in by noon, did not arrive till midnight : so that I had not more than thirty men with me."

1848.

“After I had despatched my letter yesterday, I learned that Captain Abbott’s regiment, stationed at Kurara, had deserted that post, and arrived, with two guns, at Rawul Pindée, intending to proceed thence to join the Hazareh force. I immediately sent orders to the levies *en route* to join me to concentrate at Margulla, with the view of stopping there the further progress of the mutinous regiment. I rode out myself early this morning and surveyed the position; it is not of any great strength, but I know not a more suitable one for my purpose; and I trust I shall be able to hold it, though my levies are not very warlike; were they Afghans or Hazareh men, I should have no doubts. The regiment did not attempt to cross to-day, but, I hear, purposes doing so to-morrow; I shall be at the position myself; my levies amount to about eight hundred.”

Next morning, at break of day, John Nicholson with his levies found himself face to face with the mutinous regiment. The odds were against him, for the mutineers had two guns; but Nicholson, with the cool courage and resolute bearing which even then overawed all opponents, addressed them, saying that he desired nothing more than that they should return to their allegiance, but that if they held out an hour longer he would inflict upon them the punishment due to mutineers. Stormy then was the debate which followed in the enemy’s camp. Some were for peace, some were for war; but the advocates of the former prevailed, and before the hour of grace had expired the colonel of the recusant regiment had tendered his submission, and offered to march anywhere at the English officer’s commands.

But there was much work to be done after this in the open country; and Nicholson was compelled to pay repeated visits to Attock to see after the safety of the post. “It was during the thirty days’ fast of Ramzan,” writes the friend and comrade whose words I have already quoted, “that some of his most arduous work was done, a time during which his followers were debarred by strict religious scruples from taking even a drop of water between sunrise and sunset; but yet, so great was the command his example obtained for him over the minds of these men, that they cheerfully endured the terrible sufferings entailed by the long and rapid marches and counter-

1848.

marches he was obliged to call upon them to make. He never spared himself; he was always the first in the saddle, and in the front of the fight. Apparently insensible to the calls of hunger, thirst, or fatigue, and really regardless of danger, his energies never failed, while his life seemed charmed, and the Mahomedan levies whom he commanded seemed to regard him almost as a demi-god. After a time, he found the calls upon him in the field so exacting, that he requested Major Lawrence to send him some trustworthy man to take command of the garrison in Attock; and Nizam-ood-dowlah Mahomed Oosman Khan, the father-in-law and formerly Wuzeer of Shah Soojah, was sent accordingly. Still Nicholson did not feel at his ease regarding the safety of the fort, and at length Sirdar Chuttur Singh, making a forced march in the hope of taking the place by surprise, he obtained early information of the Sirdar's intentions, outmarched him by one of his wonderfully rapid movements, and entered the place before the enemy could reach it."

Affair of the
Margulla Pass.

From Attock, Nicholson now wrote to Major Lawrence, begging him to send, as governor of the fort, one of the two English officers under him at Peshawur, and the choice fell upon Lieutenant Herbert. At a little before midnight of the 31st of August, Major Lawrence awoke him, and placing in his hands Nicholson's letter, expressing a strong wish to be in the open country so as to operate upon the rear of the enemy, told him it was his wish that he should proceed at once to Attock. In less than an hour Herbert was in the saddle, and about nine o'clock the next morning entered the fort, and received over command from Nicholson, who lost no time in leaving the place and getting into the rear of the enemy, and by this means was enabled to reach the Margulla Pass in time to stop Sirdar Chuttur Singh and his force, and turn them back once more after the severe struggle which first rendered his name famous. But of this affair I regret to find that the records are disappointingly scanty. Nicholson's great object was to secure the Margulla Pass, which leads from Hazareh to Rawul Pindee. The defile was then commanded by a tower, and it would appear that Nicholson attempted to seize it by something of a *coup de main*. Of course he led the assault, or, as it has been characteristically

1848.

described to me by a friend, "he was the assault itself, and failed for want of backing." His tall, commanding figure was always a sure mark for the enemy, and on this occasion he was knocked over by a stone thrown from the walls of the tower. The attempt would have been renewed, but the Sikh garrison, scared by the boldness of the first assault, evacuated the place under cover of the night. He was not much hurt, and he spoke very slightly of the accident.* Writing to his mother from Jhung, ten miles south of Hussun Abdal, September 27, 1848, he says: "I am leading a very guerilla sort of life, with seven hundred horse and foot hastily raised among the people of the country. Sirdar Chuttur Singh and his son, who are in rebellion, have eight regular regiments and sixteen guns, so that I am unable to meet them openly in the field. I received a slight hurt from a stone in a skirmish in the hills a week or two ago. I have often had a worse one, however, when a boy at school, and I only mention this because a friend wrote me from Lahore that it was reported I had been seriously hurt, and I fear lest the rumour should reach and cause you anxiety." Another proof of the tender thoughtfulness for his mother which was always so strong a feature in his character from the days of his early childhood.

Not long after this, the whole country was in a blaze, and the English and the Sikhs were contending for the mastery of the Punjab. In the crisis which then arose, wheresoever good service was to be done, there was Nicholson at hand to render it. When, on the first two days of December, the force under Sir Joseph Thackwell crossed the Chenab, it was Nicholson who provided the boats which enabled them to effect the passage, who procured intelligence of the enemy's movements, and supplies for our own troops. Ever eager

* A letter from the Lahore Resident—Sir Frederick Currie, who was then about to resign his charge to Sir Henry Lawrence—dated January 28, 1849, and published among the Parliamentary Papers, gives the best detailed account of these proceedings. It states that the correspondence regarding them had been conducted "almost, if not entirely, in private letters." "Captain Nicholson," it is added, "in these operations, per-

formed several very gallant actions (briefly described to me in a couple of lines in private notes), in one of which, in an attempt to dislodge the enemy from the Boorj, which commands the Margulla Pass, he was wounded in the face, in personal conflict with some Regulars of Baba Pendee Ramdial's regiment." An obelisk to Nicholson's memory has been erected on the site of the tower.

1848. for adventure of the most daring kind, he volunteered, before the first great battle at Chilianwallah, to make a dash with a small party on the hill-fort, beyond the Jhelum river, where Major and Mrs. George Lawrence were held captive by the Sikhs, and carry off the prisoners. The plan excited the admiration of Lord Dalhousie, but was deemed too hazardous, and the opportunity was lost. At Chilianwallah, he was with Lord Gough, to whom he rendered active services, cheerfully acknowledged in the despatch of the Commander-in-Chief. Again, at the crowning victory of Goojrat he earned the thanks of his chief. And when the pursuing force, under Sir Walter Gilbert, gave chase to the fugitive Afghans who had come down to aid the Sikhs, Nicholson, with a party of Irregulars, rode with them, and was ever at the head of the column. In the notes which day by day during the final struggle he wrote to Sir Henry Lawrence at Lahore, we catch glimpses of that consciousness of power, and intuitive genius for war, which afterwards blazed out so brilliantly in the General of 1857. Not less conspicuous in those records is the humanity which inspired him with so strong a hatred of that military licence which our troops in an enemy's country are too prone to surrender themselves. Flogging he pronounced, after three months' trial, to be useless as a check on plunder; and at last, he says, "I have written to Grant" (the Adjutant-General*) "to ask the Commander-in-Chief to give me the powers of a provost-marshal, and if I get them, rely on my bringing the army to its senses within two days." Yet how merciful after victory! "I have allowed all the prisoners made after the action" (of Goojrat) "to go quietly to their homes. I hope you approve of this." Again: "I think we should hold all guiltless whom the force of circumstances compelled to join the rebels. I mean, all who did not join Chuttur Singh till he became the paramount power in the Sind Sagur Doab. I think the Imams and Jagheers of all such as joined him *at the very outset*, and before he had the power either to reward or punish, should be confiscated; and I think those who stood well by us even when our cause looked gloomy, are entitled to have their losses

* Afterwards Sir Patrick Grant, Commander-in-Chief of Madras, and subsequently Governor of Malta.

made good to them, and receive some reward in addition.” Touches like these reveal more of the real man than aught that biographer can write. Here are some sparks struck out red-hot from the pursuit of the Sikhs after Goojrat. “Feb. 24th, 1849, 10 A.M.: I was out all yesterday and the night before after some guns I heard the enemy had abandoned about twenty-five miles off in the Bhimbar direction. I was so fortunate as to secure *nine*, so that the total captured amounts to fifty-two. . . . I hope you will get me sent on with Gilbert.” “Feb. 26th. The Commander-in-Chief has allowed me to go on as you wish it. I purpose riding in to Gilbert’s camp to-morrow. . . . I wrote you yesterday strongly on the subject of the oppression to which the unfortunate people of the country are subjected by our army. Unless I am vested with sufficient power to check this, and protect the people whom it is my special duty to protect, I would rather not be with the army. The present state of affairs is no less injurious to the discipline of the army than to its interests, for the Sikhs were never so bad. Independent of this, there is the moral wrong of plundering like so many bandits.” “Rhotas, March 2nd, 6 A.M. Lumsden and I came on a march ahead yesterday, and occupied this place. The enemy are at Dhumiak, at the head of the Bukrala Pass, which they talk of defending. . . . I did not hear from you yesterday, and could not write because I was all day in the saddle, and had no writing materials. I believe a detachment of the army is to be pushed on here to-day. The Bukrala and Goree Gullee Passes (which are the only practicable ones for guns) may both be turned by infantry, and I don’t think the enemy, dispirited as they are at present, would attempt a stand, if they heard that any party, however small, had got into their rear.” “March 3rd, 8 A.M. General Gilbert, with an advanced brigade, arrived here yesterday evening, and the rest of the force comes in to-day. The absence of any commissariat arrangements, however, I am told, will prevent our further advance for some days. . . . Many of the Sikh soldiery are said to be very anxious to be allowed to go quietly to their homes; and I have prevailed on Mackeson to issue a proclamation permitting them to do so, after first laying down their arms here. . . . I regret to say that the prisoners”

1848.

1848. (Major and Mrs. G. Lawrence) "have, in all probability, been removed from Sookhoo. I prepared to start with one thousand volunteers the day we crossed the river, but my offer was not accepted."——"Rhotas, March 4th, daybreak. I proposed last night to Mackeson to make a dash at Margulla with fifteen hundred volunteers, and to endeavour to prevent the prisoners being carried farther off. I stipulated, however, that the rest of the force, or at least a portion of it, should advance by the regular marches to our support. Lumsden also agreed to this scheme, but we have not had a decisive answer yet." "Eldrona, March 4th. (To Mr. Cocks.*)" The enemy have all retreated from Dhumiak towards Rawul Pindee. We go on to Dhumiak to-morrow. It is a thousand pities that the want of supplies and ammunition will prevent our following them up beyond Dhumiak for some days. . . . Show this to Lord Gough and Colonel Grant, and forward to the Resident." (To Sir Henry Lawrence.) "I proposed again this evening to make a dash for Margulla, but the General said the want of supplies and ammunition would prevent his supporting me. I have great hopes, however, that Chuttur Singh will, ere long, be glad to make terms for himself and family by the surrender of the captives." "Pukka Serai, March 7th, 8 P.M. My dear Cocks: Hurrah! the prisoners are all in; as is Shere Singh, who is now closeted with Mackeson, and I hope the Singhs will have laid down their arms by to-morrow evening. Show this to Lord Gough, and forward it sharp to the Resident."——"March 8th. (To Sir Henry Lawrence.) Shere Singh and Lal Singh Moraria have this morning agreed that all the guns and arms shall be surrendered, so I hope our war with the Khalsa may now be considered at an end." "Camp, Hoomuk, March 11th. The Attaree-wallahs and all the principal officers are in, and the guns are said to be close at hand. . . . The guns have actually arrived."——"March 13th, daybreak. We are just starting for Rawul Pindee. I believe we have got all the Sikh guns, and upwards of three thousand of their infantry laid down their

* Arthur Cocks, of the Civil Service, another of Sir Henry Lawrence's Assistants (of whom mention has already been made), was a dear friend of Nicholson. He was wounded at Goojrat in

repelling some Sikh horsemen who dashed through the British line and made a desperate attack on Lord Gough and his escort.

1849.

arms yesterday. I suspect the greater part of the rebel force have gone off quietly to their homes, and that we shall not find many left to disarm to-day."——"Camp, near Attock, March 17th, 6 P.M. We have the fort and twelve boats, and the Dooranees have fallen back from the right bank. As we came up this morning they evacuated the fort and broke up the bridge, consisting of sixteen boats, four of which they burned. We shall no doubt commence crossing to-morrow." So the war is over.——"March 29th, Rawul Pindee. I am not surprised to hear that the country is to be annexed. No fear of any one in this quarter, however, getting up a row about it. All regard it as annexed already." And here is Nicholson's bill against the Government for the campaign: "Jhelum, April 24th. I suppose compensation will be allowed me for my property lost at Peshawur, Attock, and Hussun Abdal. I estimate it at one thousand rupees. I also rode a horse worth four hundred rupees to death on Government service—not running away."

Then the Punjab became a British province; and in the distribution of the administrative agency which was then made, Captain John Nicholson was appointed a Deputy-Commissioner under the Lahore Board, of which Sir Henry Lawrence was President. Some advice given at this period by Sir Henry to Nicholson is so characteristic of the two men, both eminently simple and transparent, both much tried by fiery natures, that I give it here, as honourable alike to master and disciple. "April 7th, 1849, Lahore. My dear Nicholson . . . Let me advise you, as a friend, to curb your temper, and bear and forbear with natives and Europeans and you will be as distinguished as a Civilian as you are as a Soldier. Don't think it is necessary to say all you think to every one. The world would be one mass of tumult if we all gave *candid* opinions of each other. I admire your sincerity as much as any man can do, but say thus much as a general warning. Don't think I allude to any specific act; on the contrary, from what I saw in camp, I think you have done much towards conquering yourself; and I hope to see the conquest completed." To which Nicholson as frankly replied three

In the Lahore
Commission.

1848.

days later: "My dear Colonel,—*Very many* thanks for yours of the 7th, and the friendly advice which it contains. I am not ignorant of the faults of my temper, and you are right in supposing that I do endeavour to overcome them—I hope with increasing success. On one point, however, I still think I am excusable for the plain speaking which, I am aware, made me very unpopular with a large portion of the officers of the Army of the Punjab. I mean with reference to the plundering of the unfortunate people of the country, which generally prevailed throughout the campaign, and which was, for the most part, winked at, if not absolutely sanctioned, by the great majority of officers. I knew from the first that I was giving great offence by speaking my mind strongly on this subject; but I felt that I should be greatly wanting in my duty, both to the people and the army, if I did not, to the best of my ability, raise my voice against so crying an evil. For the rest, I readily admit that my temper is a very excitable one, and wants a good deal of curbing. A knowledge of the disease is said to be half the cure, and I trust the remaining half will not be long before it is effected."

By this time, John Nicholson had served for a space of nearly ten years in India; there was peace again over the land; he had suffered many times from severe illness; but above all, he was anxious to visit and to comfort his widowed mother. Another heavy affliction had fallen upon the family. A younger brother, William Nicholson, had joined the 27th Regiment, which was posted at Sukkur. One night the unfortunate young man rose from his bed, and in a state of somnambulancy went out of the house and fell down a steep declivity in the neighbourhood. From the injuries which he then received he died shortly afterwards—the second son whom Mrs. Nicholson had lost in India within the space of a few years. This catastrophe fixed John's resolution to return to England; and he wrote to his mother that, although he would lose his appointment, he could not restrain his inclination to visit England, and that perhaps through the kindness of Sir Henry Lawrence he might on his return to India be nominated to the Punjab Commission.* A kind note

* I find the following characteristic this time: "What you say about our passage in one of his letters written at prosperous days being those of the great-

from Sir Henry, dated "October 23rd, 1849, Camp, Mansera," set his mind at rest upon this point. "One line to say how sorry I am to have missed you. To-morrow we shall be at Duntour, the scene of your gallant attempt to help Abbott; but what corner of the Punjab is not witness to your gallantry? Get married, and come out soon; and if I am alive and in office, it shall not be my fault if you do not find employment here."

1849—50.

But November found him still in the Punjab. "India is like a rat-trap," he wrote, "easier to get into than out of. However, I think I am pretty sure of getting away on or before the first of next month. I go down the Sutlej by boat to Kurrachee, and there take the steamer to Bombay. From Bombay I hope to get a passage in the second January steamer to Cosseir, where I purpose disembarking and marching across to the ruins of Thebes, the oldest and greatest of cities. Thence I shall drop down the Nile by boat to Cairo and the Pyramids. From Cairo I have not yet decided on my further route, but I think that I shall probably visit Constantinople. . . . Herbert Edwardes will be my companion as far as Cairo; but as he has two of John Lawrence's little girls with him he will be obliged to go direct to England from thence. I trust to reach home before the end of March."

In this, however, he was disappointed; he was detained both at Constantinople and at Vienna longer than he had anticipated, and did not reach England before the end of April.

His sojourn at Constantinople was not uneventful. One who knew him better than any one in the world, has furnished me with the following striking episode in John Nicholson's adventurous career: "Perhaps in all his life there is nothing more characteristic of the man than two incidents which occurred during this visit to Constantinople, though few besides his immediate friends have ever heard of them. There was

1850.
On furlough.

est temptation, is quite true. I have in all you say about earthly distinctions. Believe me, I estimate them at resist the temptation. I also fully agree their proper value."

1850.

at this time living at Constantinople General G., an Englishman by birth, who had served with distinction in the Austrian army, had married (I rather think) an Hungarian lady, had thus been led to side with the Hungarians in their struggle for national existence, and was now, in consequence, a political refugee.

“Kossuth, the Hungarian patriot, had likewise found an asylum in Turkish territory from the wrath of Austria, who in vain demanded his surrender. The sturdy Turk, true to the traditions of the East, refused to betray the man who had once eaten his salt; but consented, out of courtesy, to keep him in a kind of honourable arrest at a fort in Asia Minor. Meeting Nicholson at Constantinople, General G. confided to him a design for liberating Kossuth, and begged Nicholson to give his aid. The plan was somehow thus: Kossuth was allowed daily to ride out in the country under an escort, the direction of the ride being changed from day to day. He was to arrange to ride on a particular day towards the sea-coast, and was to be met at some suitable point by the bold spirits who had undertaken his liberation. The escort was then to be overpowered, Kossuth was to be hurried off to sea, and ultimately to take refuge on board an American frigate.

“Appealed to as an Englishman to aid in such an enterprise, John Nicholson felt it impossible to refuse; and was just about to start with General G. and his companions, when the plot so carefully matured got wind through the irrepressible delight of an American lady whose husband was in the secret, and who confided it under solemn vows of secrecy to her dearest friend, who, with equal joy and sympathy, did the same, and so on, till Austrian vigilance was just in time to move the Turkish authorities to interfere.

“General G. now besought Nicholson to convey a letter for him to his wife, who was confined in an Austrian fortress without tidings of her husband's fate. There was a true and pure chivalry in Nicholson which would have done or dared anything to help a woman. The Kossuth enterprise he had felt to be in truth little business of his, and he had only joined in it from natural generosity and a kind of professional shame at declining danger in any honourable shape. But to cheer a poor lady in a dungeon with news of her husband's

1850.

safety was clearly all right in any part of the world. So he took General G.'s letter, and set out for the Austrian fortress. Now, an Austrian fortress is not the most accessible place in this earth, and when Nicholson reached it he saw at a glance that there was no getting in without leave. He therefore walked straight up to the guard at the gate and asked for the officer on duty, to whom he was at once conducted. Putting a bold face on the matter, he simply said that he was an English officer, and would be very much obliged for permission to see Madame G. The Austrian officer was evidently a gentleman and a man of feeling, and after a few moments of hesitation at so irregular a request, he gave orders for Nicholson to be allowed to see the poor lady alone for five minutes. Arrived in the cell of Madame G., and the door closed, John Nicholson, with many apologies, pulled off one of his boots, took out the letter, and presented it, saying, "You have just five minutes to read it, and give me any message for your husband." The letter was hastily read, messages were hurriedly given, gratitude was looked rather than told, the door opened, the sentry reappeared, and John Nicholson departed with a few words of courtesy and thanks to the officer at the gate.

"These two incidents speak for themselves. There is no lack, thank God, of kind men, brave men, or good men among us, but out of them all how many would have done these two things for 'his neighbour'? How many respectable men would at this moment condemn them both?"

It is pleasant, however, to learn what John Nicholson's master and great example, Henry Lawrence, and his high-minded wife, thought of the enterprise. In September, 1850, Lady Lawrence wrote from Cashmere: ". . . Perhaps you can hardly believe the interest and anxiety with which we watched the result of your projected deed of chivalry. Kossuth has taken his place in my mind as one of the true heroes. I only dread anything impairing this idea of him; and when I read of your plan my first thought was about your mother, mingled with the feeling that I should not grudge my own son in such a cause." In the same letter Lady Lawrence tells us John Nicholson's opinion of the Opera in civilised Europe: "I must not forget to say that

1850—51. we were *delighted* with your verdict on the Opera. In like manner, when we were in town, we went *once*, and, like you, said, ‘We have nothing so bad in India!’ Did not London fill you with the bewildering sight of such luxury and profusion as we in the jungles had forgotten could exist, and of vice and misery which, unless in a year of war or famine, could not be equalled here? I think his Excellency Jung Bahadoor, if he is dazzled at the splendour he sees, must be equally astonished at the wretchedness. I do not believe that in Nepaul one man out of a thousand lies down at night hungry, or rises without knowing where he will get his day’s food.” The Henry Lawrences were not among those who could see nothing good in native Indian institutions and nothing defective in our own.

Nicholson was anxious to turn his furlough to professional account by visiting the chief cities of continental Europe, and studying the military systems of all the great European Powers. He attended some gigantic reviews in the French, Russian, Prussian, and Austrian capitals, and was particularly impressed by the spectacle of the Czar Nicholas (to whom Nicholson himself bore a great personal resemblance) manœuvring twelve thousand men himself on the parade, and saluting the troops, when he first came upon the ground, with a loud “Good morning!” To which the twelve thousand responded like one man “Good morning!” to the Czar. He seemed the very ideal of an autocrat, not only ruling in the state but leading in the field. The troops that Nicholson saw were chiefly the Russian Guard, and he thought that in appearance they excelled our own as much as our own Guards excel the British line. His favourable opinion on this point elicited an energetic protest from his friend James Abbott, of the Bengal Artillery, whose chivalrous and romantic journey—already spoken of in this volume—from Herat to Khiva, and thence to St. Petersburg, after negotiating the release of a number of Russian subjects whom the Khiva chief held as prisoners, had given him full opportunity of seeing the Russian army at its outposts as well as at the capital.

From this furlough tour in Europe Nicholson carried back with him to India, where he arrived in 1851, a large access of military zeal. He also carried with him a specimen of the

1851.

Prussian needle-gun, with the merits of which he was greatly struck, but could get few professional soldiers to perceive the value of a weapon which, fifteen years later, changed the balance of power in Europe and the armament of every European army. There seems, indeed, to have been only one good thing which he did *not* take back with him to India. Herbert Edwardes had written to him from Southampton on March 20th, 1851: "Good-bye. We sail to-day. May you have a séjour in Europe as pleasant as I know you will make it profitable. . . . If you return a bachelor, this may be in your favour" (for getting a frontier district), "but if your heart meets one worthy of it, *return not alone*. I cannot tell you how good it is for our best purposes to be *helped* by a noble wife who loves you better than all men or women, but God better than you." But he *did* return alone, and alone he remained to the last.

Soon after his arrival in India, John Nicholson was re- In Bunnoo. appointed a Deputy-Commissioner in the Punjab, and for five years he continued to work as an administrative officer, almost, it might be said, on the very outskirts of civilisation. The people whom he was sent to govern were a wild and lawless race; but in process of time, by the irresistible force of his character and the vigour and justice of his rule, he literally cowed them into peace and order. The strange story of his frontier administration, and how, after the second Sikh war, he was turned into a demi-god like Hercules of old, has been told so well by John Nicholson's best and dearest friend, that I give it in his very words, written, it must be remembered, before the great mutiny of 1857, which too well proved their truth: "Of what class is John Nicholson?" wrote Sir Herbert Edwardes. "Of none: for truly he stands alone. But he belongs essentially to the school of Henry Lawrence. I only knocked down the walls of the Bunnoo forts. John Nicholson has since reduced the *people* (the most ignorant, depraved, and bloodthirsty in the Punjab) to such a state of good order and respect for the laws, that in the last year of his charge not only was there no murder, burglary, or highway robbery, but not an *attempt* at

1851—52. any of these crimes. The Bunnoochees, reflecting on their own metamorphosis in the village gatherings under the vines, by the streams they once delighted so to fight for, have come to the conclusion that the good Mahomedans of historic ages must have been just like ‘Nikkul Seyn!’ They emphatically approve him as every inch a Ruler. And so he is. It is difficult to describe him. He must be seen. Lord Dalhousie—no mean judge—perhaps summed up his high military and administrative qualities, when he called him ‘a tower of strength.’ I can only say that I think him equally fit to be commissioner of a civil division or general of an army. Of the strength of his personal character, I will only tell two anecdotes. 1. If you visit either the battle-field of Goojrat or Chilianwallah, the country people begin the narrative of the battles thus: ‘Nikkul Seyn stood just *there*.’ 2. A brotherhood of Fakeers in Hazareh abandoned all forms of Asiatic monachism, and commenced the worship of ‘Nikkul Seyn;’ which they still continue! Repeatedly they have met John Nicholson since, and fallen at his feet as their Gooroo (religious or spiritual guide). He has flogged them soundly on every occasion, and sometimes imprisoned them; but the sect of the ‘Nikkul Seynees’ remains as devoted as ever. ‘Sanguis martyrorum est semen Ecclesiæ.’ On the last whipping, John Nicholson released them, on the condition that they would transfer their adoration to John Becher;—but arrived at their monastery in Hazareh, they once more resumed the worship of the relentless ‘Nikkul Seyn.’”*

Sir Henry Lawrence at this time, as already narrated, was in political charge of the States of Rajpootana, but he had never lost sight of that band of Assistants whom he had drawn around him in the Punjab, and trained in his own “school” of duty—duty not more to the Government than to the people. Nor had the scholars ever forgot or ceased to

* “Raikes’ Notes on the Revolt in the North-Western Provinces of India.” I have further ascertained from Sir Herbert Edwardes that this sect of devotees arose when John Nicholson was scouring the country between Attock and the Jhelum, in 1848, making almost incredible marches, and performing prodigies of valour, with a mere

handful of followers. It was a simple case of the worship of Force, such as they had seen in no other man. The sect was not numerous, and the last of the original disciples dug his own grave, and was found dead, at Hurripoor, in the district of Hazareh, not long after John Nicholson fell at Delhi. Whether any successors have arisen is not known.

love their master. Between them, to the last, an affectionate correspondence was maintained. Here is a touching page of it—showing how strong were the affection and admiration which Nicholson's fine qualities excited :

1853.

“ Mount Aboo, September 21, 1853, 7½ A.M.

“ MY DEAR NICHOLSON,—Your long and kind letter of May will, I hope, some day be answered ; but I write now by my wife's bedside to give you a message she has just sent you. ‘ Tell him I love him dearly as if he were my son. I know that he is noble and pure to his fellow-men ; that he thinks not of himself ; but tell him he is a sinner ; that he will one day be as weak and as near death as I am. Ask him to read but a few verses of the Bible daily, and to say that collect, “ Blessed Lord who has caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning, grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn,” &c. &c.’ (Collect for Second Sunday in Advent.) I have just told her I had written to you as she had bidden me—(she has often, in a general way, done so the last month) ; she replied, ‘ May God bless what you have said to him ! I love him very much. I often think of all those fine young fellows in the Punjab, and what our example ought to have been to them, and how much we have neglected them.’ My dear Nicholson, these may or may not be dying words ; but she is very, very ill, and has been so for six weeks. She rallied for a while, but has again had three bad nights of pain and sleeplessness. At 5 A.M. this morning she had a violent attack in her head, from which she only rallied at 7 A.M., but is still awake now at 8 A.M., though quiet and composed. Daily and nightly she talks of you and others as of her sons and brothers. Her advice and example to you all has ever been good. Would that mine had been equally so. We have been cast on a pleasant land here, and are thankful for what God has done in spite of ourselves. Humanly speaking, she could not be alive now had we not left Lahore.*

“ Yours ever,

“ H. M. L.”

* Lady Lawrence lingered until the few precious relics of the friendship between Lawrence and Nicholson, there is

1854.

I must soon proceed to speak of the stirring events of the last few months of John Nicholson's life—months during which great promises became great performances, and heroic reputations ripened with unexampled rapidity. But before I pass on to this brightest but saddest chapter of all, I must pause for a little space to give some extracts from Nicholson's correspondence, written during the period of his administration of a frontier district of India's frontier province. They show not merely the nature of his work but the tenor of his thoughts at this time. Writing of the establishment of a Christian mission at Peshawur, he said: "Bunnoo, Feb. 19th, 1854. I wish your mission at Peshawur every success, but you require skilful and practical men as well as good men. . . . I will send you five hundred rupees (50*l.*), and as I don't want to get credit from you for better motives than really actuate me, I will tell you the truth, that I give it because I know it will gratify my mother to see my name in the subscription-list. . . . On second thoughts, I won't have my name in the Mission subscription-list. Write me down 'Anonymous.' I can tell my mother it is I." In the same letter, adverting to the war in the Crimea, he says: "I feel I missed the tide of my fortune when I gave up the idea of learning Turkish at home." On the treaty of friendship with the Afghans, he wrote to Herbert Edwardes: "Bunnoo, May 14th, 1854. How progress negotiations with the Dost? In dealing with the Afghans, I hope you will never forget that their *name is faithlessness*, even among themselves; what, then, can strangers expect? I have always hopes of a people, however barbarous in their hospitality, who appreciate and practise good faith among themselves—the Wuzeerees, for instance—but in Afghanistan son betrays father, and brother brother, without remorse. I would not take the trouble to tell you all this, which you no doubt know already, but I cannot help remembering how even the most experienced and

a New Testament with "Honoriam Lawrence" on the title-page, and these words in her husband's handwriting on the fly-leaf, "John Nicholson: in memory of his friend and warm well-wisher, Honoriam Lawrence, who was this day laid in her grave.—H. M. LAWRENCE, Mount Aboo, January 17,

1854." "Who can wonder," writes a beloved friend of the great men gone before, "at the influence exercised by those two noble hearts on all around them, when *she* on her death-bed, and *he* returning from her grave, could thus set themselves aside to seek the good of others?"

1854.

astute of our political officers, in Afghanistan, were deceived by that winning and imposing frankness of manner which it has pleased Providence to give the Afghans, as it did to the first serpent, for its own purposes." To the same correspondent he wrote, June 21st, 1854: "By-the-by, if there are any humming-tops, Jew's-harps, or other toys, at Peshawur, which would take with Wuzeeree children, I should be much obliged if you would send me a few. I don't ask for peg-tops, as I suppose I should have to teach how to use them, which would be an undignified proceeding on the part of a district officer. Fancy a wretched little Wuzeeree child, who had been put up to poison food, on my asking him if he knew it was wrong to kill people, saying he knew it was wrong to kill with a knife or a sword. I asked him why, and he said, '*because the blood left marks.*' It ended in my ordering him to be taken away from his own relatives (who ill-used him as much as they ill-taught him), and made over to some respectable man who would engage to treat and bring him up well. The little chap heard the order given, and called out, 'Oh, there's *such* a good man in the Meeree Tuppahs, please send me to him.' I asked him how he knew the man he named was good? and he said, 'He never gives any one bread *without ghee** on it.' I found out, on inquiry, that the man in question was a good man in other respects, and he agreeing, I made the little fellow over to him; and I have seldom seen anything more touching than their mutual adoption of each other as father and son, the child clasping the man's beard, and the man with his hands on the child's head. Well, this is a long story for me, and all grown out of a humming-top! Before I close this I must tell you of the last Bunnoochee murder, it is so horribly characteristic of the blood-thirstiness and bigotry of their dispositions. The murderer killed his brother near Goreewala, and was brought in to me on a frightfully hot evening, looking dreadfully parched and exhausted. 'Why,' said I, 'is it possible you have walked in, fasting, on a day like this?' 'Thank God,' said he, 'I am a regular faster.' 'Why have you killed your brother?' 'I saw a fowl killed last night, and the sight of the blood put the devil into me.' He had chopped up his

* Clarified butter.

1855—56. brother, stood a long chase, and been marched in here, *but he was keeping the fast!*" To Edwardes, Sept. 1st, 1855. "... I have asked Lord Hardinge to give me something in the Crimea; I think, with our reputation, and perhaps destiny as a nation trembling in the balance, every man (without encumbrance) who thinks he can be of the slightest use ought to go there." To the same. "Bunnoo, Oct. 23rd, 1855. "... I have had a kind letter from Lawrence, trying to dissuade me from going to the Crimea, setting before me the prospects I give up here, and the annoyance and opposition which, as a Company's officer, I am sure to encounter there. I had fully considered all this before I acted, and though it is not without a certain regret that I give up my prospects of an early independence, I believe, under the circumstances, I am doing what is right, and I trust to have an opportunity of doing the State some service, the feeling of which will compensate me for the worldly advantages I forego."

The following letter, which I give in its entire state, shows what were the dangers to which he was exposed in that wild country :

" Bunnoo, January 21, 1856.

" MY DEAR EDWARDES,—I take up my pen to give you an account of a narrow escape I had from assassination the day before yesterday. I was standing at the gate of my garden at noon, with Sladen and Cadell, and four or five chuprassies,* when a man with a sword rushed suddenly up and called out for me. I had on a long fur pelisse of native make, which I fancy prevented his recognising me at first. This gave time for the only chuprassie who had a sword to get between us, to whom he called out contemptuously to stand aside, saying he had come to kill me, and did not want to hurt a common soldier. The relief sentry for the one in front of my house happening to pass opportunely behind me at this time, I snatched his musket, and, presenting it at the would-be assassin, told him I would fire if he did not put down his sword and surrender. He replied, that either he or I must die; so I had no alternative, and shot him through the heart, the ball passing through a religious book which he had tied

* Native official attendants—literally, badge-bearers.

1856.

on his chest, apparently as a charm. The poor wretch turns out to be a Marwutee, who has been religiously mad for some time. He disposed of all his property in charity the day before he set out for Bunnoo. I am sorry to say that his spiritual instructor has disappeared mysteriously, and, I am afraid, got into the hills. I believe I owe my safety to the fur chogah, for I should have been helpless had he rushed straight on.

The chuprassie (an orderly from my police battalion) replied to his cry for my blood, "All our names are Nikkul Seyn here," and, I think, would very likely have got the better of him, had not I interfered, but I should not have been justified in allowing the man to risk his life, when I had such a sure weapon as a loaded musket and bayonet in my hand. I am very sorry for this occurrence, but it was quite an exceptional one, and has not at all altered my opinion of the settled peaceful state of this portion of the district. Making out the criminal returns for 1855 the other day, I found that we had not had a single murder or highway robbery, or attempt at either, in Bunnoo throughout the year. The crime has all gone down to the southern end of the district, where I am not allowed to interfere.

"Yours affectionately,

"J. NICHOLSON."

From Cashmere, which was fast becoming holiday-ground, John Nicholson wrote on July 9, 1856, at some length on the subject of our Central Asian policy, and the letter is worthy of attention at the present time, when the "masterly inactivity" of our statesmen is so much commended. ". . . . The news of the Shahzadah having been turned out of Herat by his own General, is important if true, as it shows that Herat has not yet fallen to Persia, and that we may be in time to save it. I doubt, however, whether Government is sufficiently alive to the importance of preserving Herat independent of Persia. We were madly anxious on the subject some years ago, but I fear we have now got into the opposite extreme; and that, because we burnt our fingers in our last uncalled-for expedition into Afghanistan, we shall in future remain inactive, even though active interference should be-

1856—57. come a duty and a political necessity. The Russians talk much about the exercise of their 'legitimate influence' in Central Asia. When we cease to exercise any influence in a country so near our own border (and which has been correctly enough called the Gate of Afghanistan) as Herat, I shall believe that the beginning of the cessation of our power in the East has arrived. And if our rulers only knew it, how easy the thing is. We don't require a large army, which in those countries it is always difficult to feed and protect the baggage of. Five thousand picked men, with picked officers, and armed with the best description of weapon (such as the revolving rifle with which the Yankees overthrew the Mexicans), would roll the Persians like a carpet back from Herat, and do more for the maintenance of our influence and reputation than a year's revenue of India spent in treaties and subsidies. We have a right to infer, from the experience of the past, that a select body of troops, however small, could achieve *anything* in Central Asia. In Afghanistan, even, our Native Infantry—save in the snow—*never* fought unsuccessfully; and many of the regiments were indifferent enough, and with anything but heroes for leaders. I fear, however, that while our people will bear in mind the disasters occasioned by incompetence without a parallel, they will ignore the lessons taught by the successful advances of Pollock and Nott, in the face of the whole Afghan nation, through as difficult a country as any in the world, and with no loss to speak of, though our infantry in those days had neither percussion locks nor rifles. Well, the long and short of all this is, if Persia does not withdraw sharp from Herat, I hope you will be able to prevail on Government *to make her*. Under any competent leader, I should be glad to go in any capacity."

Here is a glimpse of the precious compensations of work well done: "Murdan, March 9, 1857. . . . Old Coke writes me that the Bannoochees, well tamed as they have been, speak kindly and gratefully of me. I would rather have heard this than got a present of a 1000*l.*, for there could be no stronger testimony of my having done my duty among them. I hear that in an assembly the other day it was allowed 'that I resembled a good Mahomedan of the kind told of in old books, but not to be met with now-a-days.' I wish with all my

heart it were more true; but I can't help a feeling of pride, that a savage people whom I was obliged to deal with so sternly, should appreciate and give me credit for good intentions."

1857.

It happened at this time—the early spring of 1857 (as it happens, indeed, at some time or other in the lives of most men)—that there came upon John Nicholson a painful feeling, of which he could not dispossess himself, that his services were not duly appreciated; and he was anxious, therefore, to depart from the Punjab. I need not enter into the causes of his discontent, for the intentions which he had formed were overruled by a higher power. It is enough to afford a glimpse of what was passing in his mind. To Herbert Edwardes he wrote: "Camp, Topee, March 21st, 1857. I telegraphed to you yesterday, 'I wish to leave the Punjab. My reasons hereafter by letter.' I feel very sorry indeed to have been obliged to come to the conclusion that it is better for me to leave the Punjab at once while I can do so quietly. . . . If you got my telegraphic message before leaving Calcutta, I think you will probably have spoken to Lord Canning. As I said before, I am not ambitious, and shall be glad to take any equivalent to a first class Deputy-Commissionership. I should like to go to Oude if Sir Henry would like to have me. It would be a pleasure to me to try and assist him, but if he would rather not bring in Punjabees, do not press it on him. What I should like best of all would be, if we could get away together, or anywhere out of this. . . ." To the same. "Peshawur, April 7th, 1857. . . . You have done all you could, and I knew would do, for me with Lord Canning. . . . If the Persian war last, an Irregular brigade there would suit me very well, as would one on this frontier."

On receipt of Nicholson's telegram, Herbert Edwardes, who had gone to Calcutta to see his sick wife embark for England, obtained an interview with Lord Canning, and laid his friend's wishes before him. Lord Canning was greatly interested with the recital, and seemed inclined to give Nicholson a command in the still unfinished war with Persia. There were, however, difficulties in the way, as Nicholson was a Bengal officer, and the army in the Persian Gulf was

1857. from the Bombay Presidency ; but still the Governor-General expressed his willingness to do anything in his power. Desirous of leaving on Lord Canning's mind a last impression of the manner of man whose cause he had been urging, Edwardes ended with these words : " Well, my Lord, you may rely upon this, that if ever there is a desperate deed to be done in India, John Nicholson is the man to do it." This was at the end of March, 1857, when mutiny was beginning to show itself in the cantonment of Barrackpore. The next interview that Edwardes had with Lord Canning was in February, 1862. The deluge seemed to have come and gone between those dates. " Do you remember, my Lord, our last conversation about John Nicholson ?" Lord Canning said, with much feeling, " I remember it well !"

Mutiny of the
Bengal Army.

When the news of the outbreak at Meerut and the seizure of Delhi reached the Punjab, in May, 1857, Nicholson was Deputy-Commissioner at Peshawur, the outpost of British India. At the same place, in high position, were two other men, of the true heroic stamp ; men equal to any conjuncture, men to look danger of the worst type coolly and steadily in the face. General Sydney Cotton commanded the troops at the station, and Colonel Herbert Edwardes was the Commissioner in political charge of the division. The latter had only returned a week before from Calcutta. A day or two after the outbreak there arrived also at Peshawur, as we have already seen, a fourth, of whom history will take equal account—Brigadier Neville Chamberlain, who commanded the Punjab Irregular force ; and on the 13th of May a Council of War was held at the quarters of Major-General Reed, who commanded the Peshawur division of the army, to organise some plan of instant action, not merely for the defence of the Peshawur valley, but to contribute to the defence of the Punjab, and strengthen the hands of Sir John Lawrence in the deadly struggle that was coming.

Upon the first receipt of the sad tidings of the revolt of the Sepoy Army, John Nicholson, ever a man of fertile resources, had recommended as a measure of primal importance, for the general defence of the province, the formation of a

1857.

Movable Column, to traverse the country and to operate upon any point where danger might present itself. The proposal was made to his official chief and beloved friend, Herbert Edwardes, who grasped it with all confidence and cordiality, and now laid it before the Council of War, who unanimously adopted it, with a goodly string of other sturdy measures, of which, perhaps, not the least important was that by which General Reed, by virtue of seniority, was declared Commander of all the troops in the Punjab; a stroke by which that General was enabled to establish his head-quarters with those of Sir John Lawrence at Rawul Pindee, and unity was thus given to the civil and military government of the province.

The formation of the Movable Column was heartily approved by Sir John Lawrence, and carried into execution without delay. Nicholson, Edwardes, Sydney Cotton, and Chamberlain, had all volunteered for the honour of commanding it. The choice of the Chief Commissioner fell on Chamberlain, who at once took the field, leaving Cotton, Edwardes, and Nicholson to be the wardens of the frontier.

In that month of May there was no lack of work at Peshawur for the political officers; and it is hard to say how much the safety of the empire depended, under God's good providence, upon the energies of Herbert Edwardes and John Nicholson, at their peril-girt frontier station. Hand in hand, as close friends, dwelling beneath the same roof, and moved by kindred impulses, they strove mightily, day after day, from morn to night, with wonderful success. "Dark news," wrote Edwardes, some time afterwards, in his official report of these memorable transactions, "kept coming up now to Peshawur, and a rapid change was observed in the Native regiments; precautions began; Colonel Nicholson promptly removed the treasure (about twenty-four lakhs) from the centre of cantonments to the fort outside, where the magazine was, and Brigadier Cotton placed a European garrison in it at once. At Colonel Nicholson's request, the Brigadier removed from the outskirts of the cantonment, and established his head-quarters at the old Residency, which was central for all military orders, and was close to the civil officers for mutual consultation. The Residency is a strong double-

1857.

storied building, capable of defence, and it was named as the rendezvous for all ladies and children, on the occurrence of any alarm by day or night. Full often was it crowded during the eventful months that followed. . . . I think it must have been on the 16th of May that Sir John Lawrence consented to my raising a thousand Mooltanee Horse; for, before leaving Peshawur for Pindee that evening, I left the orders with Colonel Nicholson, to be issued in our joint names (for the Khans in the Derajut were as much his friends as mine). On the 18th of May, however, permission was given to raise two thousand; matters were growing worse each day, and it was now clearly understood by us, in the council assembled at Pindee,* that whatever gave rise to the mutiny, it had settled down into a struggle for empire, under Mahomedan guidance, with the Mogul capital as its centre. From that moment it was felt that, at any cost, Delhi must be regained. . . . On the 19th of May, Colonel Nicholson telegraphed to us at Pindee that the detachment of the Tenth Irregular Cavalry, at Murdan, showed signs of disaffection. On the same day, he imprisoned the Mahomedan editor (a native of Persia) of the native newspaper at Peshawur, for publishing a false and incendiary report that the Kelat-i-Ghilzee regiment had murdered its officers at the outposts. It was also on this day that Mr. Wakefield arrested a suspicious-looking Fakeer who was lurking about Peshawur, and discovered upon his person a purse containing forty-six rupees, and under his armpits a treasonable letter. The Fakeer declared that the paper was an old one which he had picked up accidentally a long while ago, and kept to wrap up snuff. But there was no sign of either age or snuff in it, and the festival of the 'Eed,' alluded to, was to fall on the 25th and 26th instant; and already the rumour was abroad, that on that religious occasion the Mahomedans of the city and valley were to rise and help the Sepoys. The Fakeer admitted that he was a frequenter of the Sepoy lines; and though Sepoys do give cow-ries and rice to beggars freely enough, they do not give forty-six bright new rupees for nothing, neither do Fakeers† con-

* Colonel Edwardes had gone to Rawul Pindee for a few days to consult with Sir John Lawrence.

† This man, on whom the letter was found, was subsequently tried by a commission and hanged.

1857.

ceal to the last, under their armpits, a housewife with nothing in it but antimony and snuff. There was no doubt, therefore, on Nicholson's mind, that this letter was from Mahomedan conspirators in the garrison to Mahomedan conspirators at the outposts, inviting them to come in with a few English officers' heads, and join in a rising on the 26th of May. Warned by these discoveries, and by secret information from both the city and cantonment, Colonel Nicholson had endeavoured to raise levies through the most promising of the chiefs of the district, to help the European soldiers in the struggle that was coming. But the time had passed, a great danger impended over the cantonment; a profound sensation had been made by the startling fact that we had lost Delhi. Men remembered Caubul. Not one hundred could be found to join such a desperate cause. . . . Colonel Nicholson was living with me at Peshawur, and we had laid down to sleep in our clothes, in a conviction that the night could not pass over quietly. At midnight the news of what had occurred at Nowshera* reached us; and a most anxious council did we hold on it. It was probable that the 55th Native Infantry at Murdan would already be in open mutiny, and in possession of the fort. But to send a reliable force against them from Peshawur would only have been to give the Native regiments a preponderance in the cantonment. Again, the news from Nowshera must soon reach the Sepoys in Peshawur, and probably be the signal for a rise. The advantage, therefore, must be with whoever took the initiative; and we resolved at once to go to the General, and advise the disarming of the native garrison at daylight."

The responsibility of the measure rested with Sydney Cotton; but he was not one to shrink from it. There was, doubtless, in the conjuncture which had then arisen, no small hazard in such a course of action as was now proposed to him; for we had external, no less than internal, dangers to face. It was certain that the Afghans were greedy for the recovery of Peshawur, and it was scarcely less certain that they would take advantage of our domestic troubles to come down in force through the Khybur Pass, and to strike a blow for the much-coveted territory. To dispossess himself at

* Outbreak of the 55th and 24th Native Infantry Regiments.

1857.

once of a large part of the military strength which had been given to him for the purpose of defending the frontier against these possible inroads, at the very time when it seemed to be most required, was a measure which might well demand hesitation. Moreover, the officers of the Native regiments believed in the fidelity of their men, and protested against an act which would cast discredit upon them, and turn friends into enemies—strength into weakness—in the hour of need. But Cotton believed that the disarming of the Native regiments was the lesser evil of the two, and he determined that it should be done.

How it was done may be best narrated in the words of Colonel Edwardes's narrative: "The two European regiments (H.M.'s 70th and 87th), and the artillery, were got under arms, and took up positions at the two ends of the cantonment, within sight of the parades, ready to enforce obedience, if necessary, yet not so close as to provoke resistance. Colonel Nicholson joined Brigadier Galloway's staff at one rendezvous, and I General Cotton at the other. These prompt and decided measures took the Native troops completely aback. Not an hour had been given them to consult, and, isolated from each other, no regiment was willing to commit itself; the whole laid down their arms. As the muskets and sabres of once honoured corps were hurried unceremoniously into carts, it was said that here and there the spurs and swords of English officers fell sympathisingly upon the pile. How little worthy were the men of officers who could thus almost mutiny for their sakes; and as weeks and months passed on with their fearful tale of revelations, there were few of those officers who did not learn, and with equal generosity acknowledge, that the disarming had been both wise and just. For the results of the measure we had not long to wait. As we rode down to the disarming, a very few chiefs and yeomen of the country attended us, and I remember, judging from their faces, that they came to see which way the tide would turn. As we rode back, friends were as thick as summer flies, and levies began from that moment to come in."

But the work was not yet done. General Cotton was now at liberty to detach a column of his reliable troops to put down the rising of the 55th Native Infantry at Murdan,

1857.

Again the aid of John Nicholson was called for, and see how it was rendered. "At eleven o'clock at night of the 23rd, a force of 300 European infantry, 250 Irregular cavalry, horse levies and police, and eight guns (six of which were howitzers), left Peshawur under command of Colonel Chute, of H.M.'s 70th, accompanied by Colonel Nicholson as political officer, and neared Murdan about sunrise of the 25th, after effecting a junction with Major Vaughan and 200 Punjab infantry from Nowshera. No sooner did this force appear in the distance, than the 55th Native Infantry, with the exception of about 120 men, broke from the fort and fled, as Colonel Chute well described it, 'tumultuously,' towards the hills of Swat. Then followed a pursuit, which, to look back on, is to renew all sorrow for the dear-bought victory of Delhi. Chase was given with both Artillery, Cavalry, and Infantry, but the mutineers had got far ahead, and bad ground so checked the guns that they never got within range. Colonel Nicholson, with a handful of horsemen, hurled himself like a thunderbolt on the route of a thousand mutineers. Even he (in a private note to me, for he seldom reported officially anything he did himself) admitted that the 55th fought determinately, 'as men always do who have no chance of escape but by their own exertions.' They broke before his charge, and scattered over the country in sections and in companies. They were hunted out of villages, and grappled with in ravines, and driven over the ridges all that day, from Fort Murdan to the border of Swat, and found respite only in the failing light. 120 dead bodies were numbered on their line of flight, and thrice that number must have borne off wounds; 150 were taken prisoners, and the regimental colours and 200 stand of arms recovered. Colonel Nicholson himself was twenty hours in the saddle, and, under a burning sun, could not have traversed less than seventy miles. His own sword brought many a traitor to the dust. Colonel Nicholson, with Colonel Chute's Movable Column, returned to cantonments in the second week of June. But we were soon to lose him. The death of Colonel Chester, at Delhi, called Brigadier-General Neville Chamberlain to the high post of Adjutant-General, and Colonel Nicholson was instinctively selected to take command of the Punjab

1857.

Movable Column, with the rank of Brigadier-General. How common sense revenges itself upon defective systems when real dangers assail a State. Had there been no struggle for life or death, when would Neville Chamberlain and John Nicholson, in the prime of their lives, with all their faculties of doing and enduring, have attained the rank of Brigadier-General? Why should we keep down in peace the men who must be put up in war?"*

The Movable
Column.

On the 22nd of June, Colonel Nicholson took command of the column, and on the 24th proceeded to Phillour. His first act on joining the force was to free himself from the danger that seemed to be hovering over him in the shape of two suspected Sepoy regiments, which might at any moment break out into open mutiny. It was sound policy to disarm them; but the operation was a hazardous one; for if they had suspected the intention, they would, in all probability, have broken and fled, after turning upon and massacring their officers. So Nicholson made a show of confiding in them, and ordered the whole column forward, as though it were marching straight upon Delhi. Then there were ominous head-shakings in the camp. What could the General mean by taking those two tainted regiments with him to the imperial city, there to fraternise with the mutineers, and to swell the rebel ranks of the Mogul? He well knew what he meant, and his meaning was soon apparent. On the morning of the 25th he was early on the camping-ground, with all his preparations made. But there was no sign of anything unusual—nothing to excite suspicion. The Europeans and the guns were in advance, and so placed that when the suspected Sepoy regiments came up, one after the other, to the camping-ground, they could completely command them. They had their instructions; but were so disposed, many of the Europeans lying on the ground as though for rest, that they never less assumed a threatening aspect than when the first of the Native regiments came up, and the men were told to pile their arms. Leaning over one of the guns, Nicholson gave his orders as coolly as though nothing of an unusual character were about to happen. "If they bolt," he said to Captain Bouchier, of the Artillery, "you follow as hard as you

* Colonel Herbert Edwardes's Report to Government.

can ; the bridge will have been destroyed, and we shall have a Sobraon on a small scale." But the Sepoy regiments, entrapped by the suddenness of the order, and scarcely knowing what they were doing, piled their arms at the word of command, and suffered them to be taken to the fort. This done, Nicholson addressed them, saying that desertion would be punished with death, and that they could not possibly escape, as the fords were watched. Eight men made the attempt, but they were brought back, tried, and condemned.

On the 27th, Nicholson wrote from Phillour to Sir John Lawrence : " You will ere this have received a copy of my letter to General Gowan, advocating the withdrawal of the troops from Rawul Pindee to Lahore. If I considered the question of slight or even moderate importance, I should, out of deference for you, have refrained from expressing publicly an opinion at variance with yours. But I think the matter one of the very greatest consequence, and that entertaining the decided opinion upon it that I do, I should be wanting in my duty if I neglected every means in my power to get what I think right done. I consider the retention of the 24th and Horse Artillery at Rawul Pindee as the most faulty move we have made in the game here, and one which I think you will repent should any check occur at headquarters. Montgomery writes me that the feeling among the Mahomedans is not good, and I do not think it good here either. I wish I were Commissioner or Deputy-Commissioner for a week."

On the following day, crossing the Beeas in boats, for the river had risen, the Movable Column quitted Phillour, and returned towards Umritsur. On the march, Nicholson wrote to Sir John Lawrence, saying : " The Movable Column as at present constituted is no doubt strong enough to put down any rebellion or disaffection which may show itself in any locality at this end of the Punjab. But suppose a rise in two places at once. Suppose, before I had disarmed, the 33rd had broken out at Hooshyapore, the 46th at Sealkote, and the 59th at Umritsur. I should have been awkwardly situated then. My position since I have got the 33rd and 35th off my hands is much better. But I think that there is still great reason why the 24th should come down from

1857. Pindee. Suppose the Commander-in-Chief to send an urgent application for more reinforcements. If the 24th were here, either it or the 52nd could move off at once. As it is, a delay of at least ten days would have to elapse."

The Trimmoo
Ghaut affair.

They reached Umritsur on the 5th of July, and were greeted by fresh tidings of mutiny in the Native Army. A regiment had risen at Jhelum; and soon it became only too certain that there had been a disastrous revolt at Sealkote, and that the mutineers had murdered many of the Europeans there. It was plain that it would soon be Nicholson's duty to inflict retribution on these offenders. Having cast off their allegiance to the British Government, they were hastening to join the revolutionary party at Delhi; so Nicholson determined to intercept them. Disencumbering himself, as he had done before, of all the remaining Hindostanee troops with him, he made a rapid march, under a burning July sun, to the station of Goordaspore. On the morning of the 12th, news came that the rebels were about to cross the Ravee river at Trimmoo Ghaut. So Nicholson moved the column forward, and about noon came in sight of the mutineers, who had by this time crossed the river with all their baggage. They were well posted, in a high state of excitement, and many of their horsemen were drugged to a point of fury with bang. They commenced the battle, and fought well; but the British Infantry and Artillery gave them such a reception, that, in less than half an hour, the Sepoys were "in full retreat towards the river, leaving between three or four hundred killed and wounded on the fields." Unfortunately, Nicholson had no cavalry, and was unable to give chase to the flying mutineers. He, therefore, withdrew his column to Goordaspore, where he soon heard that the mutineers had re-formed on the other side of the river. So he determined again to give them battle. On the 14th, he marched back to the Ravee, and found that the mutineers had planted themselves on an island in the middle of the stream, and had run up a battery on the water's edge. The river had risen since the first day's conflict, and it was necessary, therefore, to obtain boats to enable our force to strike at the enemy. This occasioned some delay, but on the morning of the 16th everything was ready. So Nicholson advanced his guns to the river's bank, and

1857.

drawing off the enemy's attention by a tremendous fire of shot and shell, moved his infantry unobserved to one extremity of the island, and placed himself at their head. Galloping in advance with a few horsemen, he came upon the pickets of the enemy; the order was then given for the advance of the 52nd, which moved forward in admirable order upon the battery, bayoneting the gunners, and putting the whole body of the enemy to panic flight. It was all over with the mutineers. They could only take to the water, where numbers of them were drowned, and numbers shot down on the sand-banks or in the stream. The few who escaped were seized by the villagers on the opposite bank, and given up to condign punishment. Never was victory more complete.

The work having been thus effectually done, the Movable Column returned to Umritsur; and Brigadier Nicholson proceeded to Lahore, to take counsel with the authorities, and "to learn how matters were going on below." He arrived there on the 21st; and on the 24th he rejoined the Movable Column, and communicated to his officers that it had been resolved that they should march with all possible speed to Delhi. On the 25th they again crossed the Beas. On the 27th, he wrote to the Chief Commissioner: "The troops I have with me here consist of Dawes's Troop, Bouchier's Battery, wing of Umritsur Police Battery, two hundred and forty (about) Mooltanee Horse, her Majesty's 52nd is a march in rear, as its colonel reported it knocked up. I have telegraphed to General Wilson about the artillery. Twelve or even eighteen guns is not a large proportion of artillery for the reinforcements going down. Moreover, the European troops coming up from below will be very weak in artillery, and it is better we should have it on the spot than be obliged to send for it. Unless General Wilson should say 'No,' I would recommend either Paton's Troop, or the battery which has come from Peshawur to Rawul Pindee, being sent down when the Punjabee Infantry Corps goes for Peshawur."

The column pushed on with all possible despatch. But General Wilson, who commanded at Delhi, was eager to take counsel with Nicholson, so the latter determined to go on in

Arrival at
Delhi.

1857.

advance of his force. "I am just starting post for Delhi," he wrote on the 6th of August, "by General Wilson's desire. The column would be at Kurnaul the day after to-morrow, and I shall, perhaps, rejoin it at Paneeput." There were those at Delhi who, then seeing John Nicholson for the first time, were struck by the extreme gravity of his demeanour;* but every one in camp felt that a strong man had come among them, and that under Providence his coming would give new energy to the besiegers, and hasten the hour of the final assault. Meanwhile there was some pressing work, which it was thought might be entrusted to his column. During this first brief visit to Delhi, he moved from post to post, visited all the batteries, and looked down, with sagacious forecaste of the work before him, upon the great city as seen from the Ridge. When he returned to his column there was an eager longing to converse with him. "Expectation was on tiptoe," wrote an officer of the brigade, "to hear his opinion as to the state of affairs. He told me that the tide had turned, but that we should have some tough work; and that General Wilson had promised our column a little job, to try our 'prentice hands,' to dislodge a body of troops who had taken up their position with some guns in the neighbourhood of the Ludlow Castle." But the little job could not wait for Nicholson and his comrades. The fire of the enemy became so annoying that it was necessary to carry their position at once; so the work

* See Mr. Greathed's Letters: "General Nicholson was at dinner (on August 7th). He is a fine, imposing-looking man, who never speaks if he can help it, which is a great gift for a public man. But if we had all been as solemn and as taciturn during the last two months, I do not think we should have survived. Our genial, jolly mess-diners have kept up our spirits." The author of the "History of the Siege of Delhi, by an Officer who served there," says: "About this time a stranger, of very striking appearance, was remarked visiting all our picquets, examining everything, and making most searching inquiry about their strength and history. His attire gave no clue to his rank; it evidently never cost the owner a thought. It was soon made out that this was General Nicholson, whose person was not

yet known in camp; and it was whispered at the same time that he was possessed of the most brilliant military genius. He was a man cast in a giant mould, with massive chest and powerful limbs, and an expression ardent and commanding, with a dash of roughness; features of stern beauty; a long black beard and sonorous voice. There was something of immense strength, talent, and resolution in his whole gait and manner, and a power of ruling men on high occasions, that no one could escape noticing at once. His imperial air, which never left him, and which would have been thought arrogance in one of less imposing mien, sometimes gave offence to the more unbending of his countrymen, but made him almost worshipped by the pliant Asiatics."

was entrusted to Brigadier Showers, and he did it right gallantly and well.

1857.

On the 14th of August, Nicholson, at the head of his column—their flags flying and band playing—marched into the camp at Delhi. “It was a fine sight,” wrote one who went out to meet it, “to see the column march in. There were great greetings among both officers and men, and they received a hearty welcome. The column was played in by the band of the 8th. Altogether it was a cheery sight, and would have struck gloom among the Pandeas if they could have seen it.” It was believed by many that the appearance of these reinforcements would be the signal for the assault on Delhi. But it was doubtful whether success could be secured without the aid of a powerful siege-train; so it was resolved that the final measures for the capture of the imperial city should not be taken until after the arrival of the heavy guns which were then coming down from Ferozepore.

But, in the mean while, there was other work to be done. Nujufgurh. It was apprehended that the enemy were about to manœuvre, so as to make their way into our rear. So it was determined to give them battle; and Nicholson was selected to settle their business. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon of the 24th of August, when, after a most difficult march through a country of swamps, and fording a sheet of water more than three feet deep, near Nujufgurh, he found the enemy in position on his front and left. Their line extended from the canal to the town of Nujufgurh, a distance of nearly two miles. They had four guns strongly posted near an old serai on the left centre, and nine others between that point and the bridge. It was there, on the left centre, that Nicholson determined to attack them, and having forced their position, to sweep down their line of guns towards the bridge. Nothing could have been more successful than the operation. A few rounds from our artillery guns prepared the way for the advance of the British infantry, with Nicholson at their head, full upon the serai. The attack was irresistible; the enemy were driven from their position; and then Nicholson changed front to the left, swept along the whole line of guns, captured them, and put the mutinous brigade to flight. “There was

1857. not," said a distinguished Punjabee officer some time afterwards, "another man in camp—except, perhaps, Chamberlain—who would have taken that column to Nujufgurh. They went through a perfect morass. An artillery officer told me that at one time the water was over his horses' backs, and he thought they could not possibly get out of their difficulties; but he looked ahead, and saw Nicholson's great form riding steadily on as if nothing was the matter, and so he felt sure all was right."

Of the results of the action, Nicholson wrote a few days afterwards to Sir John Lawrence: "I enclose a rough draft of my report. The field was of such extent, that it was not easy to estimate the mutineers' loss. I think, moreover, that they suffered more severely from the fire of our artillery, after they had bolted across the bridge, than they did on the actual battle-field. According to all accounts, the Neemuch brigade (the one I dealt with) only musters 600 men now. Many of those who fled would appear never to have returned to Delhi. Most of the officers with me in the action rated them at 6000, 7000, and 8000. My own idea is that they were between 3000 and 4000. Except when poor Lumsden was killed, they made little attempt to stand. Most of the killed were Kotah Contingent men. We took the Neemuch troop of artillery complete, three L. F. Battery guns, and four of the King's Own. I wish sincerely they had had as many more, as, after their flank was turned, they could not have used them, and must have lost them all. An old Soubahdar, who stuck in a jheel, begged for mercy, on the ground that he had eaten the Company's salt for forty odd years, and would never do it again! The 13th and 14th Irregulars, who were in the action, are talking of asking pardon. I feel very thankful for my success, for had these two brigades succeeded in getting into our rear, they would undoubtedly have done much mischief."*

Many and warm were the congratulations which poured in upon him on this memorable occasion. General Wilson wrote to him, on the following day, saying: "My dear Nicholson;—Low, my A.D.C., has just arrived with the grati-

* Nicholson's official report of the battle is given at full length in the Appendix.

1857.

loved and venerated as their some-time master and ever as their example. Authentic intelligence of the death of Sir Henry Lawrence, on the 4th of July, had made its way slowly to Delhi and the Punjab. The first reports of this great calamity had been received with incredulity. What ardently men wished they still believed, until the evidence was undeniable. Then there was great grief throughout the camps of the English, and none sorrowed more than Henry Lawrence's old Punjabee assistants. What Edwardes and Nicholson felt may be gathered from these touching letters :

FROM HERBERT EDWARDES TO JOHN NICHOLSON.

"Peshawur, Aug. 20, 1857.

"MY DEAR NICHOLSON,—I was very glad to get your long letter of the 12th, as also yours of the 11th to Sir John, which he kindly sent on for my perusal. Since I last wrote to you, what a loss have we sustained in our ever dear friend Sir Henry (Lawrence). There seem doubts in the Delhi camp about it, but Lord Canning's letter to J. L. mentions that General Neill received the news in a letter from Lucknow, so I conclude it is quite true. It would be too selfish to wish it otherwise, for what a change for him ! After his long battle of life, his restless strife for the benefit of others—the State, the Army, the native Princes, the native people, the prisoners in gaol, the children of the English soldiery, and all that were poor, and all that were *down*—to close his flashing eyes for the last time on a scene of honourable struggle for his country, and open them again where there is no more evil to resist—no wrong—all right, and peace, and rest, and patient waiting with all who have gone before, till earth's trial comes to an end, and a perfect heaven begins. It must be the only real happiness he ever has felt, poor fellow ; and we could not wish to bring him back to the dust, and noise, and misconstruction of even so great and good a labour as the reorganisation of our army and empire in India. Fine, brave old fellow ! he has fought his fight and won his victory, and now let him lay his armour down and rest ! You cannot think what a comfort I find in the memory of the eight days I spent with him in April last. . . . In the days when you and I first knew H. M. L. he was heart and soul a

1857.

philanthropist—he could not be anything else, and I believe truly that he was much more, and had the love of God as a motive for the love of his neighbour. All good and sacred things were precious to him, and he was emphatically a good man; influencing all around him for good also. But how much of the *man* there was left in him; how unsubdued he was; how his great purposes, and fiery will, and generous impulses, and strong passions raged in him, making him the fine genuine character he was, the like of which we never saw, and which gathered such blame from wretched creatures as far below the zero of human nature as he was above it. He had not been tempered yet as it was meant he should be; and just see how it all came about. Cruelly was he removed from the Punjab, which was his public life's stage, and he was equal to the trial. His last act at Lahore was to kneel down with his dear wife and pray for the success of John's administration. We who know all that they felt—the passionate fire and earnestness of both their natures, her intense love and admiration of her husband, whose fame was the breath of her nostrils, and his indignation at all wrong, whether to himself or a dog—must see in that action one of the finest and loveliest pictures that our life has ever known. Nothing but Christian feeling could have given them the victory of that prayer. What a sweet creature she was! In sickness and sorrow she had disciplined herself more than he had, and as they walked along their entirely happy way together, she went before, as it were, and carried the lamp; so she arrived first at the end of the journey, and dear heart-broken L. was left alone. All of trial must have been concentrated to him in that one stroke, he loved her so thoroughly. But again, and for the last time, he had the necessary strength given him, and his character came slowly out of that fire, refined and sweet to a degree we never saw in him before. I do so wish you had been with me, and dear —, and indeed all our old circle who loved him so, to see him as I saw him at Lucknow. Grief had made him grey and worn, but it became him like the scars of a battle. He looked like some good old knight in story. But the great change was in his spirit. He had done with the world, except working for it while his strength lasted; and he had

1857.

come to that calm, peaceful estimate of time and eternity, of himself and the judgment, which could only come of wanting and finding Christ. Every night as we went to bed he would read a chapter in the New Testament (out of the Bible she had under her pillow when she died), and then we knelt down by his bed, and he prayed in the most earnest manner, dwelling chiefly on his reliance on Christ's atonement, to which he wished to bring all that he had done amiss that day, so as to have nothing left against him, and be always ready; and asking always for grace to subdue all uncharitableness, and to forgive others as he hoped to be forgiven himself. The submissive humility and charity of these prayers was quite affecting; and I cannot say how grateful I feel to have been led, as it were by accident, to see our dear chief in these last and brightest days of his bright and good career. For the same reason I tell it you, and have told it to Becher, because it completes that picture and memory of our lost friend which will ever make him our example. Oh no! we had better not wish the news untrue, but try and follow after him. The English mail has not yet come, and so I cannot give you any news of —. I am very anxious for this mail, because it will tell me how she bore the first news of the mutiny. She could not anticipate that Peshawur would remain so safe as it has. Rather a rebuke this fact is to the senators in the House of Lords, who on the 6th of July discussed the impropriety of Lord Canning subscribing to missions. Surely Peshawur is the most likely place in our empire for a manifestation against missionaries, but not a word has been said against them. When the Peshawur mission was first started, there was an officer in this station who put his name down on the subscription-list thus: 'One Rupee towards a Deane and Adams' Revolver for the first Missionary.' He thought the God of the world could not take care of the first missionary in so dangerous a place as this. Well, this same officer went off with his regiment to a safe place, one of our nicest cantonments in Upper India, and there his poor wife and himself were brutally murdered by Sepoys who were not allowed missionaries. Poor fellow! I wonder if he thought of these things before he died. You see, I have told you all that is going on here, and said

1857. nothing about affairs in Delhi. But not the less am I constantly thinking of you there, and wishing you great usefulness and no wounds. Give my love to Chamberlain. I am glad you are both together there, and wish I were with you."

JOHN NICHOLSON TO HERBERT EDWARDES.

"Camp before Delhi, September 1, 1857.

"MY DEAR EDWARDES,—I have your kind good letter of the 20th and 23rd August before me. I do so wish I could have seen dear Sir Henry under the circumstances you mention. If it please Providence that I live through this business, you must get me alongside of you again, and be my guide and help in endeavouring to follow his example, for I am so weak and unstable that I shall never do any good of myself. I should like to write you a long letter, but I cannot manage it. . . . The siege train will probably be here in four or five days, and I trust we shall then go in without delay. I doubt if we shall attempt a breach, or anything more than the demolition of the parapet, and silencing the fire of such guns as bear on this front. We shall then try to blow in the gateway, and escalade at one or two other points. I wish Chamberlain, Coke, Showers, Daly, and many other good men were not *hors de combat* from wounds. . . . God be with you, dear E.

"Ever yours affectionately,

"J. NICHOLSON."

The Siege of
Delhi.

He was now becoming very eager for the assault, and ceaseless in his endeavours to promote the necessary preparations. On the 4th of September he wrote: "I think we have a right to hope for success, and I trust that ere another week passes our flag will be flying from the palace minarets. Wilson has told me that he intends to nominate me Military Governor, for which I am much obliged; but I had rather that he had told me that he intended to give me command of the column of pursuit." On the 7th he wrote: "Poor Pandy has been in very low spirits since then (the battle of Nujufghur), and, please God, he'll be in still lower before the end of this week." And then, after some military details,

1857.

he added, with that tender regard and affection for those serving under him which is characteristic of all great soldiers : " A poor orderly of mine, named Saadut Khan, died here of cholera the other day. He has a mother and a brother, and I think a wife, in the Eusofzye country. Should I not be left to do it, will you kindly provide for the brother, and give the women a couple of hundred rupees out of my estate?" And again on September 11th, chafing sorely under the procrastination that so vexed him : " There has been yet another day's delay with the batteries ; but I do not see how there can possibly be another. The game is completely in our hands."

The hour so anxiously looked for came at last. The assault was ordered ; and Brigadier John Nicholson was selected to command the main storming column. If the choice had been left to the army, he would have been selected by universal acclamation to fill the post of honour and of danger. On the morning of the 14th of September, the columns, eager to assault, and flushed with the thought of the coming victory, streamed out in the grey dawn. They were to move in different directions, in accordance with a preconcerted plan, Nicholson himself leading the first column of attack. At first, everything seemed to promise a speedy success. But, after a while, it became apparent that the defence was more vigorous than had been anticipated. The breach had been carried, and the column, headed by Nicholson, had forced its way over the ramparts into the city. This first critical feat of arms having been successfully accomplished, the Brigadier-General might then have fallen back into the Commander's post, and directed the general movements of the storming party. And had he done so he might still have been amongst us ; but his irrepressible enthusiasm urged him forward. He still pushed on, as personal leader of the column, and was ever in the front, where danger was the thickest. Some of his friends, with a mournful prevision of what might be the result of this characteristic disregard of self, had urged him to restrain his impetuous daring, and he had made them some half promises that he would comply with their entreaties ; but when the time came, and he saw what there was to be done, it was not in his nature not to forget for a while the General in the Soldier,

1857.

and to set an example of personal gallantry before the eyes of his followers at a time when hard, resolute, stubborn fighting was needed to consummate our success. The streets were swarming and the windows and house-tops were alive with the enemy, many of them armed with rifles. It was just the kind of fighting that the English soldier least relishes. "The truth is," I have been told by one of John Nicholson's friends, "that the share of that day's work assigned to Nicholson's column in General Wilson's project of attack was too extensive for the column to perform. And Nicholson was not the man to leave unexecuted a fragment of such a duty. The men of the column had—in soldier's language—had their stomach full of fighting already, in the desperate struggle at the walls, and they were not up to carrying out the programme. They reeled doggedly and slowly on. The Sepoys in vast numbers disputed their advance. Under such circumstances it is of no use talking to soldiers, they won't do any more. But Nicholson tried, and as he stood before them entreating them to follow farther, his single and stately figure became an easy mark. It would, indeed, have been a miracle had he escaped." A Sepoy from the window of a house took steady aim at him, and he fell shot through the chest.*

He desired to be laid in the shade, and on no account to be carried back to camp till Delhi had fallen. But it was soon apparent that we were still a long way off from that consummation; so he allowed himself to be placed on a litter and carried to a hospital-tent. He was in fearful agony when he was brought in, and the blood was streaming down his side. But it was not at once discernible that the wound must cer-

* "Nicholson," we are told by Mr. Cave Browne, "saw the emergency. He pushed on the 1st Fusiliers, who answered to his call right gallantly. One gun was taken and spiked; twice they rushed at the second; the grape ploughed through the lane; bullets poured down like hail from the walls and houses; Major Jacob fell mortally wounded at the head of his men; Captain Speke and Captain Greville were disabled; the men were falling fast; there was hesitation; Nicholson sprang forward, and whilst in the act of waving his sword to urge the men on once more—alas for the column! alas for the

army! alas for India!—he fell back mortally wounded, shot through the chest by a rebel from a house window close by, and was carried off by two of the 1st Fusiliers." Colonel Norman says: "It was in advancing beyond the Moree bastion towards the Lahore gate that he met the wound which has since caused his death—a death which it is not too much to say has dimmed the lustre of even this victory, as it has deprived the country of one of the ablest men and most gallant soldiers that England anywhere numbers among her ranks."

tainly prove mortal, though small hope of his recovery was entertained by the medical officers who attended him.

1857.

I need not write much more. I have before me the history of the hero's last days written by another hero, whilst the memory of Nicholson's death-bed was still fresh within him, and the great wound of his sorrow unhealed. It is a letter written by Brigadier Neville Chamberlain to his and Nicholson's dear friend, Herbert Edwardes—a letter the pathetic simplicity of which goes straight to the heart. It is in such records as this that, thinking of him who wrote it, of him to whom it was written, and of the third great soldier of that noble triumvirate of whom it was written, that we see those beautiful examples of affectionate and enduring comradeship which it was ever the tendency of the old Indian service bounteously to develop :

“ Delhi, October 25, 1857.

“ MY DEAR EDWARDES,—My conscience tells me that I have been guilty of great unkindness in having delayed for so long to give you an account of poor John Nicholson's last days. The truth, however, is, that the intention to discharge this sad duty has never been absent from my mind, but whenever I have attempted to do so, I have felt so unequal to the task that I have given it up, in the hope that I should be better able to do it justice at another time. This is how days have mounted up to weeks, and weeks to a month, for more than a month has now elapsed since our dear friend closed his eyes for ever upon this life.

“ Knowing what an affectionate interest you took in all that concerned him, I will commence my letter by giving you an outline of how his time was passed from his joining the camp before Delhi to the day of the storm.

“ Of all the superior officers in the force, not one took the pains he did to study our position and provide for its safety. Hardly a day passed but what he visited every battery, breastwork, and post ; and frequently at night, though not on duty, would ride round our outer line of sentries to see that the men were on the alert, and to bring to notice any point he considered not duly provided for. When the arrival of a siege-train and reinforcements enabled us to assume the

1857. offensive, John Nicholson was the only officer, not being an engineer, who took the trouble to study the ground which was to become of so much importance to us ; and had it not been for his going down that night, I believe that we might have had to capture, at considerable loss of life, the positions which he was certainly the main cause of our occupying without resistance. From the day of the trenches being opened to the day of the assault, he was constantly on the move from one battery to another, and when he returned to camp, he was constantly riding backwards and forwards to the chief engineer endeavouring to remove any difficulties.

“ This is the character of our dear friend as a soldier, and as he was known to all ; but I must now describe him when at leisure, and as a friend. When he first arrived in camp I was on my back, and unable to move, and only commenced to sit up in bed on the siege-train arriving. Under these circumstances, I was, of course, only able to associate with him when he was at leisure, but out of kindness to my condition he never failed to pass a portion of the day with me, and frequently, though I would beg of him to go and take a canter, he would refuse, and lose the evening air. My recovery, after once being able to sit up, was rapid, and by the time our first battery opened, I was able to go in a doolie on to the ridge and watch the practice. He would frequently insist upon escorting me, and no woman could have shown more consideration—finding out good places from which to obtain the best view, and going ahead to see that I did not incur undue risks, for he used to say no wounded man had any business to go under fire.

“ On the 12th of September, or two days before the storm, all the principal officers in camp were summoned to meet at the General's tent at eleven A.M., to hear the plan of the assault read out, and receive their instructions. Nicholson was not present, the cause of his absence being that he had gone down to see the opening salvoes of the great breaching battery within one hundred and sixty yards of the water bastion, and the engineers had been behind their promised time. That evening he accompanied me on my tour along the ridge up to Hindoo Rao's house, and on our return insisted upon my going to his tent and dining with him. After

1857.

dinner he read out the plan of assault for the morning of the 14th, and some of the notes then made by him I afterwards found among his papers.

“ The 13th was, of course, a busy day for everybody, but I saw a good deal of him, as he rode over to my tent two or three times to get me to exert my influence with General Wilson in favour of certain measures considered expedient. On returning from my evening tour on the ridge, I found him in the head-quarters' camp, whither he had come to urge upon the General the importance of not delaying the assault, if the breach should be reported practicable. We sat talking together for some time, and I begged him to stay and dine with me, but he said he could not, as he must be back in his camp to see his officers and arrange all details. This was about eight P.M., or later, and we did not meet again until the evening of the 14th, when he, poor fellow, was lying stretched on a charpoy, helpless as an infant, breathing with difficulty, and only able to jerk out his words in syllables at long intervals and with pain. Oh, my dear Edwardes, never can I forget this meeting, but painful as it would have been to you, I wish you could have been there, for next to his mother his thoughts turned towards you! He asked me to tell him exactly what the surgeons said of his case; and after I had told him, he wished to know how much of the town we had in our possession, and what we proposed doing. Talking was, of course, bad for him, and prohibited, and the morphia, which was given to him in large doses, to annul pain and secure rest, soon produced a state of stupor. That night I had to return to Hindoo Rao's house, as I held the command on the right after Major Reid's column being driven back, and his being wounded. Before returning, I, however, again saw him about eleven P.M.; he was much the same, but feeling his skin to be chilled, I suppose from the loss of blood, and two hand punkahs going, I got him to consent to my covering him with a light Rampore blanket. The next evening I again returned to camp, and saw him; he breathed more easily, and seemed altogether easier—indeed, his face had changed so much for the better, that I began to make myself believe that it was not God's purpose to cut him off in the prime of manhood, but that he was going to be spared to

1857.

become a great man, and to be the instrument of great deeds. On this evening, as on the previous, his thoughts centred in the struggle then being fought out inside Delhi; and on my telling him that a certain officer did allude to the possibility of our having to retire, he said, in his indignation, 'Thank God I have strength yet to shoot him, if necessary.'

"That night I slept in camp, and the next morning, before going to join General Wilson inside Delhi, I had the poor fellow removed into one of the sergeants' bungalows (a portion of which had not been destroyed by the mutineers when the cantonment was fired on the 13th of May), as he complained of the heat; the distance was not great, and the change was effected without putting him to much pain. He was thankful for the change, and said that he was very comfortable. Before quitting him, I wrote down, at his dictation, the following message for you: 'Tell him I should have been a better man if I had continued to live with him, and our heavy public duties had not prevented my seeing more of him privately. I was always the better for a residence with him and his wife, however short. Give my love to them both.' What purer gratification could there be in this world than to receive such words from a dying man? I can imagine no higher reward; and long, my dear Edwardes, may you and your wife be spared to each other and to the world, to teach others the lesson you imprinted so forcibly on John Nicholson's true and noble heart!

"Up to this time there was still a hope for him, though the two surgeons attending him were anything but sanguine. He himself said he felt better, but the doctors said his pulse indicated no improvement, and notwithstanding the great loss of blood from internal hemorrhage, they again thought it necessary to bleed him. I always felt more inclined to be guided by what he himself felt than by the doctor, and therefore left him full of hope.

"One of the surgeons attending him used to come daily to the town to dress my arm, and from him I always received a trustworthy bulletin. From the 17th to the 22nd, he was sometimes better and sometimes worse, but he gradually became weaker, and on the afternoon of the latter date, Dr. Mactier came to tell me that there was little or no hope. On

1857.

reaching him, I found him much altered for the worse in appearance, and very much weaker—indeed, so weak that, if left to himself, he fell off into a state of drowsiness, out of which nothing aroused him but the application of smelling-salts and stimulants. Once aroused, he became quite himself, and on that afternoon he conversed with me for half an hour or more, on several subjects, as clearly as ever. He, however, knew and felt that he was dying, and said that this world had now no interest to him. His not having made a will, as he had proposed doing the day before the storm, was the source of some regret to him, and it was his wish not to delay doing so any longer, but as he said he then felt too fatigued from having talked so much, and was too weak to keep his senses collected any longer, he begged me to leave him to himself until the evening, and then arouse him for the purpose. On this afternoon he told me to send you this message: ‘Say that if at this moment a good fairy were to give me a wish, my wish would be to have him here next to my mother.’ Shortly after writing down the above to his dictation, he said: ‘Tell my mother that I do not think we shall be unhappy in the next world. God has visited her with a great affliction, but tell her she must not give way to grief.’

“Late in the evening, when asked if he could dictate his will, he said he felt too weak to do so, and begged that it might be deferred until the following morning, when he hoped to be stronger. But death had now come to claim him; every hour he became weaker and weaker, and the following morning his soul passed away to another and a better world.

“Throughout those nine days of suffering he bore himself nobly; not a lament or a sigh ever passed his lips, and he conversed as calmly and clearly as if he were talking of some other person’s condition and not his own. Painful as it would have been to you, I wish you could have seen him, poor fellow, as he lay in his coffin. He looked so peaceful, and there was a resignation in the expression of his manly face, that made me feel that he had bowed submissively to God’s will, and closed his eyes upon the world full of hope. After he was dead I cut off several locks of hair for his family and

1857. friends, and there is one for Mrs. Edwardes and one for yourself.

“It is a great consolation to think that he had the most skilful attendance, and was waited upon as carefully as possible. Nothing was left undone that could be done, but God had willed that he was not to live to see the result of a work he had taken so prominent a part in bringing about.

“His remains rest in the new burial-ground in front of the Cashmere Gate, and near Ludlow Castle. It is near the scene of his glory; and within a few yards of his resting-place stands one of the breaching batteries which helped to make the breach by which he led his column into the town. Ludlow Castle was the building used by us on that day as a field hospital; and here the two brothers met—having shaken hands and parted near the same spot, both full of life, and health, and hope, a few short hours previously—the one mortally wounded, the other with his arm dangling by his side by a shred.

“I think you will agree with me that the spot where our dear friend sleeps his last sleep cannot be marked too plainly and unostentatiously; and I am therefore going to erect a monument of the most simple description. I wish you would kindly write a suitable inscription.

“This is the end of my account of our poor friend's last days, and I deeply regret that my duties did not permit of my being more with him. My only solace is that he knew and appreciated the cause; and when, the afternoon before his death, I said to him he must have thought me very neglectful, his reply was: ‘No; I knew that your duty to the Service required your being at head-quarters, and I was glad to think that you were there to give your counsel.’

“Hereafter, if it is ordained that we are to meet, I shall have much to tell and talk to you about that I have not been able to include in a letter, and if it were only on this account, the sooner we meet the better, for I know how dear to you is everything connected with the memory of John Nicholson.

“Our good friend Becher begged me to give him some account of poor Nicholson's last days, and I dare say you will

not object to giving him such extracts of this letter as you may think will interest him.*

1857.

“ I am, yours affectionately,

“ NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN.”

To this touching narrative may be added from other sources a few more particulars of the great soldier's dying days. From Colonel J. R. Becher, C.B., Hurreepore, October 28th, 1857: “. . . I heard to-day from Buckle at Delhi. He saw poor John Nicholson after his wound. These are his words: ‘ I saw John Nicholson after he was wounded. I had just been assisting in taking off his brother's arm. I spoke to him, telling him that when he was with the Edwardeses, at Abbottabad, we had met, and that I would be at hand if he wanted anything done, or if I could in any way be useful to him. He recognised me, and said, “ Nothing now.” He wanted a little lemonade, which was sent for. He was then quite quiet, and as collected and composed as usual, but very low—almost pulseless. What struck me was his face—it was always one of power—but then, in its calm pale state, it was quite beautiful. His brother, when a little recovered from the operation, was brought in his doolie, and the two stayed thus for some little time, but were then sent on into camp. I never saw Nicholson after that time, nor did he send for me.’ I think you will like to read this picture of the great, good fellow, mortally wounded, composed, and beautiful in his glorious death.” From the same; December 12th, 1857: “ I have just heard from Chamberlain at Delhi, dated December 5th, and as he tells me that he omitted to give you an account of the visit of the Mooltan Pathans to the last sad remains of dear John Nicholson, I transcribe his account. It is a very grand picture—a death-bed very proudly honoured: ‘ The Sirdars of the Mooltanee Horse, and some other natives,

* In a letter written a few days later to the same correspondent (Palace, Delhi, October 31st, 1857), Chamberlain adds: “ Your letter to poor John Nicholson, giving an account of your days at Lucknow, and of your last impression of Sir Henry, is amongst his papers. He gave me the letter to read (he had not heart to read it *aloud* to me) the

day it arrived, and he promised to give me a copy of it. On the 13th of September I reminded him that he had not fulfilled that promise, when he said he would do it *that night*; but I begged of him not to allow anything of the kind to encroach upon his few hours' rest.”

1857.

were admitted to see him after death, and their honest praise could hardly find utterance for the tears they shed as they looked on their late master. The servants and orderlies also who were in attendance on him, when the fact flashed across their minds that he had left this world for ever, broke out into lamentations, and much as all natives feared to displease him, there could be no question but that he commanded their respect to an extent almost equal to love.'"—From Lieutenant Montgomerie, of the Guides, October 10th, 1857 : "I helped to lift poor Brigadier Nicholson out of the doolie on to a bed, and afterwards remained bathing his temples with eau-de-Cologne. The poor man was in fearful agony, and the blood was flowing down his side. He was shot through the body. . . . It was terrible seeing the great strong man, who a few hours before was the life and soul of everything brave and daring, struck down in this way. . . . He did not die for some days. Our victory was dimmed by his loss. I could have followed him anywhere—so brave, so cool, and self-possessed, and so energetic, you would have thought that he was made of iron. The shot that killed him was worth more to the Pandys than all the rest put together. He would be invaluable now. I can do but poor justice to merits like his, but I write what I feel."

The following, from a memorandum by Sir Herbert Edwardes (Peshawur, January 30, 1858), gives some further particulars of Nicholson's last days : "Daly,* speaking last night of John Nicholson, said that 'he had a genius for war. He was a grand fellow. He did not know his own powers. But he was beginning to find them out. His merits were recognised throughout the camp. Between the 6th and 14th of September, he rose higher and higher in the minds of all, and when General Wilson's arrangements for the attack were read out, and the post of honour was given to Nicholson, not a man present thought that *he* was superseded. He was much pleased at getting the Commissionership of Leiah. I said, "Oh, you will not take it now that you are sure to remain a General, and get a division." He laughed haughtily, and said, "A General! You don't think I'd like to be a

* Colonel H. Daly, C.B., who commanded the Guide Corps at the siege of Delhi.

1857.

General of Division, do you? Look at them! Look at the Generals!" He was indignant at the injustice done to Alexander Taylor, the Engineer, and said, in Chamberlain's tent, "Well, if I live through this, I will let the world know who took Delhi;—that Alexander Taylor did it." . . . How the two brothers loved each other! The great one used to come down to see me when I was wounded; and the little one found out the hour, and used to drop in as if quite by accident, and say, "Hilloa, John, are *you* there?" And John would say, "Ah, Charles, come in!" And then they'd look at each other. They were shy of giving way to any expression of it; but you saw it in their behaviour to one another. He was much affected by your letter about Sir Henry. He showed it to me. . . . He did not say much, I believe, about his religious feelings on his death-bed. The fact is, he was in great pain, and could only speak in a whisper.' "

How he was laid in his last earthly resting-place in the new burial-ground near the Cashmere Gate of Delhi, has been told by the chaplain who performed the funeral service over the remains of the departed hero: "Soon after sunrise," he has recorded, "of the morning of the 24th of September, the painful duty of consigning the mortal remains of this great soldier to the tomb devolved upon me. It was a solemn service, and perhaps the simplicity which characterised the arrangements of the funeral added considerably to the solemnity of the occasion; particularly when you realised and contrasted with this simplicity the acknowledged greatness of the deceased. The funeral cortége was comparatively small; very few beside personal friends composed the mournful train. Most prominent and most distinguished of all those who best loved and best valued Nicholson was Chamberlain. He had soothed the dying moments of the departed hero, and having ministered to his comforts while living, now that he was dead and concealed from his sight, he stood as long as he well could beside the coffin as chief mourner. The corpse was brought from the General's own tent on a gun-carriage; whether covered with a pall or otherwise I cannot say. But no roar of cannon announced the departure of the procession from camp; no volleys of musketry disturbed the silence

1857. which prevailed at his grave; no martial music was heard. Thus, without pomp or show, we buried him. He was the second of those commanders who, since the capture of Delhi, was laid beneath the sods of Ludlow Castle graveyard. And over his remains, subsequently to this date, sincere friendship has erected a durable memorial, consisting of a large slab of marble, taken from the King's garden attached to the imperial palace. Few and simple are the words inscribed thereon, but all-sufficient, nevertheless, to perpetuate the indissoluble connexion of Nicholson with Delhi."*

And when it was known that Nicholson was dead, there rose a voice of wail from one end of India to the other. No man was more trusted in life; no man more lamented in death. There was not a tent or a bungalow in all the country occupied by an Englishman in which there was not a painful sense of both a national and a personal loss. Nor was the feeling of grief and dismay confined to his own countrymen. In the great province where he had served so long, thousands speaking in another tongue bewailed the death of the young hero. Few men have ever done so much at the early age of thirty-five; few men thus passing away from the scene in the flower of their manhood, have ever left behind them a reputation so perfect and complete.

Testimonials.

How men of all kinds wrote about the saddest incident of the great siege—how the public and private correspondence of the day teemed alike with lamentations and eulogies, I have abundant proofs before me. A few may be gathered here to show how great was the admiration of John Nicholson's noble qualities. Sir John Lawrence to Lieutenant Charles Nicholson, November 12th, 1857: "I have long desired to write you a few lines expressive of my deep regret and sympathy for the death of your noble brother. His loss is a national misfortune. None of his friends have lamented that loss more deeply nor more sincerely than myself. Your own severe wound, which at any other time would have caused no little pain, must have been forgotten, I know, in the bitter grief at your brother's suffering and death. I wish I could say or do anything to give you comfort."—To the Government of India, September 15th, 1857: "I am to add that our loss

* "A Chaplain's Narrative of the Siege of Delhi."

1857.

appears to have been very severe. Among many brave and good soldiers, there is not one who in merit, by general consent, can surpass Brigadier-General John Nicholson. He was an officer equal to any emergency. His loss, more particularly at a time like this, is greatly to be deplored."——October 3rd, 1857: "The Chief Commissioner cannot close this despatch without again adverting to the loss of Brigadier-General Nicholson. That noble soldier was mortally wounded on the 14th, and died on the 23rd of September. He was an officer of the highest merit, and his services since the mutiny broke out have not been surpassed by those of any other officer in this part of India. At a time like this his loss is a public misfortune."——"The Governor-General in Council has received with much regret the intelligence of the death of Brigadier-General Nicholson. His Lordship in Council desires me to convey to you the expression of his sincere sorrow at the untimely loss the Government has sustained in the death of this very meritorious officer, especially at a time when his recent successes had pointed him out as one of the foremost among the many whose loss the State has lately had to deplore."——General Sydney Cotton, Peshawur Division Orders, September 25th, 1857: "With heartfelt and unaffected sorrow Brigadier-General Cotton announces to the troops under his command the death at Delhi, on the 23rd instant, of Brigadier-General Nicholson. Bold, resolute, and determined, this daring soldier and inestimable man fell mortally wounded when gallantly heading a column of attack at the assault of Delhi on the 14th instant. In him England has lost one of her noblest sons, the Army one of its brightest ornaments, and a large circle of acquaintances a friend warm-hearted, generous, and true. All will now bewail his irreparable loss."——Sir Robert Montgomery to Sir Herbert Edwardes, Lahore, October 2nd, 1857: "... My dear friend, what has befallen India since we parted, omitting the fearful massacres, and, worse than these, *your* two best friends have fallen, the *two great men*, Sir Henry (Lawrence) and Nicholson. They had not, take them all in all, their equals in India. I know how bitterly you must have felt, and still do feel, their loss, and your wife will deeply feel it. Had Nicholson lived, he would, as a commander, have risen

1857. to the highest post. He had every quality necessary for a successful commander; energy, forethought, decision, good judgment, and courage of the highest order. No difficulties would have deterred him, and danger would have but calmed him. I saw a good deal of him here, and the more I saw the more I liked him."——The same to the author: "He did much towards establishing British rule on our advanced frontier. He left a name which will never be forgotten in the Punjab. He possessed all the characteristics and qualities of a man formed to command, and to make an impression on the bold, warlike, and martial tribes along our extreme frontier. He had a tall and commanding figure, a bold and manly bearing, an eye that seemed to penetrate all that was working in the heart. His discernment of native character was remarkable, and he selected and had around him the most faithful and devoted followers. He was fearless in danger, and was ever to the front, and inspired all with admiration. He was as swift to punish as he was quick to reward. He had truly a hand of iron in a silken glove. His life had been more than once attempted by the fanatics of the border. I once received an official letter from him, written, as well as I can remember, in the following laconic words: 'Sir, I have the honour to inform you that I have just shot a man who came to kill me. Yours obediently, J. N.'"^{*}——Sir Herbert Edwardes: "Doubtless God knows what is best, so His will be done! But the blow is very great to us all—to his poor mother, to his brother Charles, to his friends, to the army at large, to his country. For my own part, I feel as if all happiness had gone out of my public career. Henry Lawrence was as the father, John Nicholson was the brother, of my public life, and both have been swallowed up in this devouring war, this hateful, unnatural, diabolical revolt. How is one ever to work again for the good of natives? And never, never again can I hope for such a friend. How grand, how glorious a piece of handiwork he was! It was a pleasure to behold him even. And then his nature so fully equal to his form! So undaunted, so noble, so tender to good, so stern to evil, so single-minded, so generous, so heroic, yet so

^{*} The story of this attempt on his life is told at page 452. He described Bunnoo as "a paradise peopled by fiends."

1857.

modest ; I never saw another like him, and never expect to do so. And to have had him for a brother, and now to have lost him in the prime of life—it is an inexpressible, an irreparable grief. Nicholson was the soul of truth. It did not please God to keep so noble a character to be an honour to him on earth through a long life ; but let us fondly hope that it has pleased Him to accept his service for all eternity.”

Such was the testimony of those who knew him best—who had worked with him, and served with him, and taken sweet counsel with the departed ; but I would fain show also what an example he was to those beneath him—how the junior officers of the Army (he was himself young in years, though high in rank, when he died) looked up to him with profoundest admiration. A young officer who had served in his brigade wrote : “He was a very brave man and a most valuable public officer, very determined, very bold, very clever, and very successful ; therefore his loss is most deeply felt, and every one feels that his place will not easily be supplied, nor the empty void filled where before his presence was so much felt and appreciated. He was a man in whom all the troops had the most unbounded confidence, and whom they would have followed anywhere cheerfully ; yet he was quite a young man, who advanced himself by his own endeavours and good services. He had a constitution of iron. The day we marched to Murdan he was twenty-six hours in the saddle, following up the mutineers. I never heard so much anxiety expressed for any man’s recovery before, and the only term I know that is fully adequate to express the loss we all felt is, that in each of our hearts the victory that day has been turned into mourning. He was a man whom all would have delighted to honour, and was beloved both for his amiability and kindness of disposition, and his more brilliant qualities as a soldier and a ruler of the people. He was Assistant-Commissioner here before, and his name was known and dreaded by all the hill tribes around, and by all the inhabitants of the valley of Peshawur. When it was known that he was dangerously wounded, every one’s first inquiry was, ‘How is Nicholson ? Are there any hopes of his recovery ?’ He is now gone from us, but his memory will be long cherished, and the example of his daring and bravery will stimulate

1857.

those who knew him to emulate his deeds. His death has caused as much grief as that of that estimable, brave, and heroic good soldier, Sir Henry Lawrence."——Another in like strain wrote: "There was a fine, brave soldier there (meaning at Delhi), Nicholson. He was an army in himself. He was the man who, I am told, advised the assault, planned, and carried it out. He knew the salvation of India depended on it, and that it must be risked at all odds—that the country could not stand a further delay. That brave man led one of the assaulting columns, and was killed. He was, without an exception, the finest fellow I ever saw in the shape of a soldier. Handsome as he was brave, determined, cool, and clever, I knew him well at Peshawur, and I feel his loss to be one which the country cannot replace."

I will only add to these one more tribute to John Nicholson's memory. When that meeting, of which I have already spoken, was held at Calcutta to do honour to the memory of the three departed heroes, Neill, Havelock, and Nicholson, the Advocate-General, Mr. Ritchie, a singularly able and accomplished man, whose career was but too short, thus eloquently spoke of the young General's death:* "Then turn we," he said, "to the death of the heroic Nicholson. He fell a youth in years, a veteran in the wisdom of his counsels, in the multitude of his campaigns, in the splendour of his achievements. He fell as a soldier would wish to fall, at the head of his gallant troops, with the shout of victory in his ear; but long after he fell mortally wounded, he resisted being carried to the rear, and remained heedless of the agony of his wounds, heedless of the shadows of death closing around him, to animate his troops, checked, but only for a while, in their advance, by the loss of such a leader. Was not such a death worthy of such a life; and will not the Caubul gate, where he fell, live in future British history, as live those heights of Abraham, on which there fell, a century ago, another youthful general, the immortal Wolfe?—like him in the number of his years, like him in his noble qualities and aptitude for command, like him in the love and confidence he inspired in all around him, and like him in the wail of sor-

* See *ante*, pp. 413—414, in "Memoir of General Neill."

row, which told him his death marred the joy of the nation in the hour of victory."

1857.

It remains only to be recorded that those for whom this good servant of the State lived and died, and who would have honoured and rewarded him in life, were not forgetful of him in death. The Queen commanded it to be officially announced that Brigadier-General Nicholson would, had he survived, been created a Knight Commander of the Bath, and the Company did that, the knowledge of which, beyond all other human things, would have most soothed his dying moments—they voted, in recognition of his services, a special grant of 500*l.* a year to that beloved mother, whose early influence and instruction had done so much to foster the germs of his noble character.

* * * I cannot suffer this imperfect sketch of the career of John Nicholson to go forth, without publicly acknowledging that it owes any interest it may possess mainly to the large and liberal assistance, which Sir Herbert Edwardes has rendered me, in the course of its preparation for the present work. Believing that the best biographies are those in which the autobiographical element is the most prominent, I have endeavoured in all these sketches to make the men of whom I have written tell, as fully as possible, the stories of their own lives; and I have ever sought the aid of those survivors who have known them best. And I believe that, by so doing, I have imparted an amount of vitality to my narratives which, had I trusted more to my own words, would have been absent from them.

APPENDIX.

ELDRED POTTINGER IN LORD AUCKLAND'S CAMP.

THE anecdote given at page 185, in the Memoir of Major Eldred Pottinger, was received by me from so trustworthy a source, that I have perfect faith in the authenticity of the story. But some readers may, perhaps, question its accuracy, because no mention is made of the incident in Miss Eden's very pleasant book—*Up the Country*—which contains a diary kept during the very viceregal progress, in the course of which Pottinger is said to have made his appearance in the Governor-General's camp. It is not, indeed, an unfair inference that, as Miss Eden could not have been ignorant of the fact, and as it is obviously a kind of anecdote that the journal-writers would have made a point of recording, it is probable that it never happened as narrated. But there are some gaps in Miss Eden's journal, and references to some portions of it having been lost. So the story may have been told by her, though the sheet containing it never reached its destination.

(Note, p. 373.)

NEILL AT ALLAHABAD.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL NEILL TO THE ADJUTANT-GENERAL OF THE
ARMY.

“Allahabad, June 17.

“SIR,—I have the honour to report my arrival here on the afternoon of the 11th inst., with a party of 40 men, the Fusiliers having had more difficulty in getting on from Benares consequent on the disturbed state of the country, the road being partly deserted, and all the dawk horses taken away by the insurgents. I found Allahabad closely invested, except on the river-side, it being only ap-

proachable from the rivers; the bridge of boats on the Ganges partly destroyed; it and the village of Deeragunge in possession of the insurgents. On arriving at the end of the Benares road, at the village of Jansee, I was obliged to move down to my left; was fortunate to bribe some natives to bring a boat over to the left bank of the Ganges, in which I embarked part of my men. The people in the fort having by this time seen us, sent over boats some way down; by these means we all got into the fort, almost completely exhausted from our long night's march and the intense heat. On assuming command, I at once determined to drive the enemy away, and open up some communication with the country. On the following morning I opened fire with several round shots on those parts of Deeragunge occupied by the worst description of natives, attacked the place with detachments of Fusiliers and Sikhs, drove the enemy out with considerable loss, burnt part of the village, and took possession of a repaired bridge, placing a company of Sikhs at its head for its protection. The next day, Major Stephenson's detachment of 100 men, which had left Benares by bullock-train the same evening, had crossed the bridge into the front. On the morning of the 13th, I attacked the insurgents in the village of Kydgunge, on the left bank of the Jumna, and drove them out with loss. On the 14th I could do little or nothing. Ever since I arrived here I have observed great drinking among the Sikhs and the Europeans of all classes, and it was not long before I learnt that large godowns belonging to merchants and river steam companies had been broken into and plundered, and the contents were distributed all over the place. Quantities of all kinds of spirits and wine were brought into the fort by the Sikhs, sold to our soldiers at the lowest prices, and the consequence was drunkenness to a disgraceful extent in the garrison. The Sikhs showed anything but a subordinate spirit, and being in the same range of barracks with our men, caused me no small anxiety. I endeavoured to get hold of or destroy all the liquor and rum, and succeeded in both by directing the Commissariat to purchase all the liquors the Sikhs had to sell. I sent out the only two carts I had to empty what remained in the godowns into the Commissariat stores, and destroyed all that I could otherwise lay hold of. It appeared to me most desirable to get the Sikhs out of the fort; they were very loth to go, and their officers did not appear to me to have that authority over them to oblige them; it required some tact and management, and was happily effected by Captain Brasyer, who deserves the greatest credit. They are now outside in some houses, the old native hospital, and others on the bank of

the Jumna, under the guns of the fort, and, although attacked and obliged to retire on the night of the 14th inst., some, including the adjutant, wounded, yet they soon regained their position. I felt that Allahabad was really safe when every native soldier and sentry was out of it, and as long as I command I shall not allow one to be on duty in it. On the evening of the 14th I threw a shell from a howitzer on the brutes into Kydgunge, and the morning of the 15th early opened the same fire with round shot also upon it at daylight. I sent a steamer up the Jumna with a howitzer, under command of Captain Harwood, of the Artillery, and a party of 20 picked shots of the Fusiliers, under Lieutenant Arnold of that corps, who went up the river, some distance above the city, and did much execution. The Sikhs were directed to attack and clear Kydgunge and Mootingunge, on the Jumna, and were supported on the right by 50 of the Fusiliers, under Lieutenant Bailey, and the small party of Irregular Cavalry. The troops behaved with great gallantry and spirit in the heat of the sun; the Sikhs had the legs of the European, and the country they had to go over was less difficult; the opposition they met with was not so great; they, however, punished the enemy severely, although they fire badly, and are very wild. The Fusiliers met with some resistance, did good execution among the enemy, but had two men killed and six wounded, all severely, one dangerously, including Lieutenant Bailey, shot through the thigh. The insurgents were so thoroughly beaten at all points, and our men had followed them up so close to the city, that we have since been informed the greatest terror seized them all, and they all fled from the city during the night. They had also lost several of their chiefs, and the Moulavie, the chief of the insurrection, is now, I understand, with a few followers, about 14 miles off. There are still some villages inhabited by Mahomedan tawnties, who took a prominent and active part in the night of the mutiny, I will make an example of; but I cannot march out until I get sufficient cattle for my artillery, and also to draw carriages to convey wounded or men knocked over by the sun. Many Sepoys, supposed to be from Delhi, fought against us. We have had intelligence from the city of the dispersion and flight of most of the ringleaders. The Moulavie has fled, and two of his men of rank were slain on the 15th. Our two guns, taken away from the bridge of boats by the 6th, were sent in to our outposts yesterday morning; also Mr. Cheek, of the 6th, since dead, and Mr. Conductor Coleman and his family, who escaped the night of the mutiny, although severely wounded and badly treated. The troops are in high spirits and as good health as can be expected

this fearful weather. The Fusiliers have endured more exposure and fatigue than most soldiers; their conduct has been admirable. I cannot speak too highly of Captain Brasyer, of the Sikhs; he alone has kept that regiment together, and all right here. He deserves the greatest credit. He assisted me very greatly indeed in getting the Sikhs out of the fort. I almost feared at one time that force would have to be employed. It was a very near thing indeed. Fortunately, I was able to employ the Sikhs in the constant attacks, which assisted. The Fusiliers now here consist of 11 officers and 360 men.

“ I have, &c.,

“ J. G. NEILL, Lieutenant-Colonel,

“ Commanding Allahabad.”

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL NEILL TO THE ASSISTANT-ADJUTANT-
GENERAL OF THE ARMY.

(Extract.)

“ Allahabad, June 19.

“ I last did myself the honour of addressing you on the 17th inst. On the following morning I moved out with all my force, having the previous day obtained bullocks for my two guns. I sent one party of 80 Fusiliers and 100 Sikhs in a steamer, with a howitzer, up the river, to attack and destroy the Pathan village of Derryabad, and the Mewattie villages of Sydabad and Russelpore, and to co-operate with me. I marched from cantonments, with 200 Fusiliers, two guns, all the Sikhs and Irregular Cavalry, and proceeded as far as the gaol, thus getting between the city and the villages belonging to, and said to be occupied by, the insurgents. I met with no opposition, the enemy, I regret to say, having disappeared during the night; I swept and destroyed these villages, and collected all my force on the parade-ground of the 6th Bengal Native Infantry. It was my intention to have occupied the church and other buildings during the heat of the day, but as symptoms of cholera among the Fusiliers occurred during the night, one man having been taken ill *en route*, I determined to return to the fort with all the Europeans, and leave Captain Brasyer and his Sikhs, with the Irregular Cavalry, accompanied by Mr. Court, collector and magistrate, to destroy several villages beyond the church, which work was properly done. I got back to the fort about 7 A.M., and regret to say that several of the men came into hospital with cholera in its worst form. Eight men were buried last evening, and 20 this evening; there are still

many cases in hospital, but of a milder nature, and I hope, with God's blessing, for the best.

"I had before this, fearing disease from the crowded state in which I found the fort, sent off two steamer-loads of women and children, and, as the cantonment is now safe, I directed all the non-combatants out of the fort; this order has been attended to. I have also established a European hospital in a Masonic building a short distance from the fort, to which I have removed all cholera patients. I have also occupied the dawk bungalow near it with a subaltern's party for its protection; 100 Europeans are in tents on the glacis, and I move out 200 to-morrow to a tope of tree near the dawk bungalow. No rain has yet fallen, the heat is intense, and the soldiers, after their hard work and exposure, are much prostrated. The barracks here are in bad order, followers of any description being also unprocurable. There are but few punkahs and no tatties; the men have, therefore, not the proper advantages of barrack accommodation for this hot season. I regret to add that the supply of medicines here has failed; there appears to have been little or none kept in Allahabad, and our detachments only brought up sufficient for the march.

"I am now in expectation of the arrival of the *Mirzapore*, which was also detained by the same authorities, which I hope has some little medicine on board. At the same time, I have also to complain of the civil authorities at Ghazeepore presuming to keep back and not delivering to the officer commanding troops on board the *Mirzapore*, in Calcutta, written orders I sent through them for the removal of the treasure at that station on board the steamer, to be brought by the Europeans to Benares.

"Two hundred bullocks, with drivers, were brought in here yesterday; this is all our public carriage at present; our Commissariat officer is away, and that department is, in consequence, inefficient. I am prevented, therefore, from pushing on, as I wish, troops to Cawnpore; his Excellency may feel assured that I will do so as soon as I possibly can. I, however, apprehend that nothing can be done until we have had a shower of rain. A detachment of the 84th Queen's may be in to-morrow; I shall place them in the church, and the other European troops, as they arrive, in other buildings in the cantonment. I beg to enclose Captain Fraser's report of his march from Benares to this place. Much good service has been done by so thoroughly opening the road. The men of the detachment acquitted themselves in their usual soldier-like and enduring manner; and I beg to bring to the notice of his Excellency Captain

Fraser, an intelligent and energetic officer, in whom I have the utmost confidence in any emergency. I am organising a body of irregular cavalry, by joining Captain Palliser's detachment of the 13th Irregular Cavalry with the few men of Captain Alexander's corps still remaining faithful to us, and expect to entertain some Sowars. I have established a system of patrolling in the neighbourhood with the troopers, to encourage the people to bring in supplies.

"The Moulavie has left this with about 3000 followers; his destination is unknown, but supposed to be Lucknow, or in this neighbourhood. I have arranged to beat up his camp if it is."

(*Note, p. 468.*)

THE BATTLE OF NUJUGURH.

LETTER FROM BRIGADIER-GENERAL NICHOLSON TO THE DEPUTY-ASSISTANT ADJUTANT-GENERAL, DELHI FIELD FORCE, DATED AUGUST 28, 1857.

"I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of Major-General Wilson, commanding before Delhi, that, agreeably to his orders, I marched from this at daybreak on the 25th, to intercept a force of the enemy, said to be moving from Delhi towards Bahadoorghur, with the intention of attacking us in rear.

"On my arrival at the village of Nanglooe, about nine miles from this (and to reach which I had to cross two difficult swamps), I learned that the enemy had been at Talmu the previous day, and would probably reach Nujufgurh in the course of the afternoon; I, therefore, decided on leaving the Bahadoorghur road, and, if possible, coming up with and routing the enemy at Nujufgurh before nightfall.

"I crossed a tolerably deep and broad ford over a branch of the Nujufgurh Jheel, near the village of Bassrowla, at about four P.M., and found the enemy in position on my left and front, extending from the bridge over the Nujufgurh canal to the town of Nujufgurh itself, a distance of a mile and three-quarters or two miles. Their strongest point was an old serai on their left centre, in which they had four guns; nine more guns were between this and the bridge.

"It was five o'clock before the troops were across the ford and parallel with the position; as the enemy was so far advanced, and

I had no guides, I laboured under the disadvantage of being compelled to make a very hasty reconnaissance.

“ The plan which I determined on was, to force the left centre (which, as I have said, was the strongest part of the position), and then changing front to the left, to sweep down their line of guns towards the bridge.

“ I accordingly formed up her Majesty's 61st Regiment, the 1st Fusiliers, and the 2nd Punjab Infantry (with the exception of one hundred men of each corps, whom I had had told off on the march as a rear-guard and reserve), with four guns on the right and ten on the left flank, supported by the squadron of 9th Lancers and Guide Cavalry; and, after the artillery had fired in a few rounds, I advanced, and charged with the infantry.

“ The enemy was driven out with scarcely any numerical loss to us (though her Majesty's 61st had a most gallant and promising officer, Lieutenant Gabbett, mortally wounded); and I then charged front to the left, and so turned the position in which their guns were. The enemy made little resistance as we advanced, and were soon in full retreat across the bridge, with our guns playing upon them: thirteen of their field-pieces having fallen into our hands.

“ At the same time that I attacked the serai, I directed Lieutenant Lumsden, officiating commandant of Major Coke's corps, the 1st Punjab Infantry, to advance and clear the town of Nujufgurh on our right. This service was well performed by Lieutenant Lumsden, who, after passing through the town, brought his right shoulders forward and followed in rear of the main line.

“ The enemy's guns were now all in our possession, and I supposed the conflict at an end, when it was reported to me that a few men had concealed themselves in the little village of Nuglee, which was at this time a few hundred yards in rear of our line. I immediately sent orders to Lieutenant Lumsden, who was then nearly abreast of the village, to drive them out; but, though few in number, they had remained so long that our troops were on all sides of them, and seeing no line of retreat open, they fought with extreme desperation.

“ Lieutenant Lumsden was, I regret to say, killed, with eleven of his men, twenty-six more were wounded, and I was obliged to send back the 61st Regiment to reinforce the 1st Punjab Infantry; this corps also suffered the loss of another gallant officer, Lieutenant Elkington, dangerously wounded, and five men killed, and several more were wounded before the village was in our possession.

“ The enemy's cavalry, apparently not less than a thousand

strong, more than once made a show of charging during the action, but were on each occasion driven back by the fire of our artillery. Our own cavalry, I regretted much my inability to employ against them, but I had been obliged to leave the squadron 2nd Punjab Cavalry, under Lieutenant Nicholson, and a hundred and twenty of the Mooltanees, to look after the baggage; and I had, of Lancers, Guides, and Mooltanees, not more than three hundred left to escort the guns and form a reserve.

"I passed the night at the bridge with the 1st Fusiliers and 2nd Punjab Infantry, and a detachment of Artillery and Lancers. I had the bridge mined and blown up by the sappers, and all the waggons and tumbrils which I had not the means of bringing away were also blown up by Major Tombs. Shortly after daybreak I started on my return to camp, and fearing lest more rain should render the ground (already sufficiently difficult) quite impracticable, I brought the column in the same evening.

* * * * *

"The troops are likewise entitled to great credit for the cheerfulness with which they bore the hardships they were exposed to; they marched at daybreak, and had to cross two difficult swamps before their arrival at Nanglooe, and as it would not have been prudent to take the baggage across the ford at Baprowla, they were obliged, after fourteen hours' marching and fighting, to bivouac on the field without food or covering of any kind."

(FROM THE CHAPLAIN'S NARRATIVE OF THE SIEGE OF DELHI.)

"THE day was very wet, and the roads were well-nigh impassable; the country for miles round was nothing more than a marsh. The enterprising spirit of Nicholson was, however, equal to cope with any amount of obstacles. Neither fatigue, nor rain, nor swamps, nor enemy, nor all these in combination, could deter him in his onward progress. The force marched upon a village, nearly half way to Nujufgurh. Here a halt was proclaimed, in order to collect information respecting the enemy's probable location and intended movements.

"Shortly after some rebel cavalry were discovered ahead. Information was obtained from the village to the effect that the enemy had crossed a bridge in the neighbourhood, and immediately the column resumed its march. Some ten or twelve miles more of road were traversed. It was a journey by water rather than by land: ponds had to be forded to the depth of several feet. At length a

march of eighteen miles or more had been fully accomplished, and the enemy's camp was at last in sight.

"Nicholson's ardour could not resist the temptation of an *immediate* attack. Not but that he had consideration for his troops; he appreciated the hardships which they had already passed through, and knew from personal experience that they must be jaded; but to dream of rest, even for a single hour, was to give a cowardly enemy, in overwhelming numbers, estimated at six thousand men, an opportunity of flight. Moreover, it was half-past five, and the sun would soon be down; every moment was therefore precious. The sooner a commencement of proceedings was made, the greater the prospect of doing what was to be done in a thoroughly complete manner, and not after the fashion of some, who love to accomplish only by halves. Besides, our advance column had met with a warm reception from the enemy, the rebels having opened upon them with fire of musketry and cannon; and the fire of their artillery and infantry was said to have been both brisk and severe.

"However great may have been the disinclination on our right to fight there was no longer help for it. The infantry fell into line at the word of command, the artillery wheeled into position on either flank, and, bounding forward with a dash, commenced the conflict. A serai was the first object of attack; it was full of the enemy, who had guns placed there.

"The Brigadier knew the value of a few stirring words spoken from the heart to the heart; there is power in that kind of eloquence, whether the speaker can ordinarily arrest public attention in a set speech or not. I don't think that at this moment Nicholson felt any ambition, that, in connexion with his memory, the fact should be recorded that among his other excellences he excelled in oratory; but, doubtless, he did wish that if, in the designs of Providence, this was to be his last command, and these likewise his last words, they might carry conviction to the minds of his audience of the imperative necessity for the caution he wished to suggest, and, at the same time, inflame the hearts of his soldiery with ardour for victory, which no odds or valour on the part of the enemy, and nothing, in fact, short of death itself, should quench. 'Remember, men,'* said the commandant, 'the experience which others have

* Another version of this address, as preserved by one of the soldiers of the 61st, runs thus: "Now, 61st, I have but a few words to say. You all know what Sir Colin Campbell said to you at Chillianwallah; and you must also have heard that he used a similar expression

at the battle of the *Alma*, that is, 'Hold your fire till within twenty or thirty yards of that battery, and then, my boys, we will make short work of it.'"
—*An Officer's Narrative of the Siege of Delhi.*

gained. Take for your example the 93rd, and other regiments in the Crimea, who spurned to waste ammunition while at a distance from the enemy. Reserve your fire for a close range, and victory must be yours.'

"Her Majesty's 61st and the 1st Europeans heard to obey. The next words were, 'Line advance.' The infantry moved as steadily and cheerfully as if on a parade. Soon the war-cry of the British soldier was heard—the manly cheer of Englishmen, which accomplished the rush towards the serai. In another moment the building, with its guns, was ours, and its sable defenders partly in our power. Now the Sepoys tried the efficacy of flight; they made for the bridge, and there vainly endeavoured to maintain a stand. It was worse than useless. The precision of our artillery fire was the admiration of our own force, and the terror and destruction of the enemy.

"Upon this a company of infantry was ordered, as a covering party, to hold the bridge until preparations had been completed for blowing it up; which was done both nobly and well, in spite of the galling cannonade directed against the bridge and its guardians from some guns which the rebels still possessed. Maximilian Geneste, as dauntless in the discharge of duty, and as steady and cool under fire as any one present, made ready for the explosion. The enemy, I presume, seeing what was coming, would, if they could, have retaken the bridge. They made the attempt, but were disappointed, and defeated. The engineer arrangements were not completed till long after midnight; during all which time the troops were without refreshment. Soon after this the train was fired, and the bridge was destroyed, hardly so much as a vestige remaining.

"Such was the victory gained by the little army under the brave Nicholson on the 25th day of August, 1857. It was as brilliant as complete."

THE END.

LONDON :

PRINTED BY C. WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.

Bayerische
Staatsbibliothek
München



Kaye, John W.,

Lives of Indian officers illustrative of the history of civil and military
services of India ; in two volumes

Bd.: 2

London (1867)

H.as. 2009-2

urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10433546-7